ABSTRACT

Title of Document: THE ACCULTURATION OF ADULT AFRICAN REFUGEE LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN ISRAEL: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

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The number of refugees from Africa seeking asylum in Israel has recently skyrocketed, raising issues as to how to integrate them into Israeli society. Education is one of the mediums being used to encourage the cultural integration and inclusion of the refugees into Israeli society; very little is known, however, about how Africans are acculturating or whether language education is helping with this process. In particular, I use Berry's model of acculturation and Ogbu's cultural model as lenses through which the acculturation of refugees can be understood. In order to provide an answer to these questions, I conducted an ethnographic study examining the acculturation of adult African refugees participating in a language program in Tel Aviv. I utilized criterion-based sampling to select 8 student participants for this study. Data collection consisted of interviews with student-participants, interviews with teacher participants and document review. Data analysis entailed the coding and categorization of data elicited from data collection. Results suggest that participants exhibited the characteristics of immigrants

employing a separation/segregation acculturation strategy according to Berry's model. Most participants also have the characteristics of what Ogbu calls involuntary migrants. Instead of facilitating host country cultural understanding or participation, higher language proficiency was associated with more negative perceptions of Israelis and Israeli society.

Keywords: acculturation, Africa, Israel, refugees

THE ACCULTURATION OF ADULT AFRICAN REFUGEES LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN ISRAEL: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

By

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Dedication

There are a number of people in my life, without whom completing this dissertation would not have been possible. First and foremost I dedicate this to my wife, for always believing in me and supporting my dreams. Thank you for being willing to accompany me on every adventure. I love you and hope we have many, many more. I also dedicate this to my mother, father and the rest of my family, for teaching me to go after the things I wanted and instilling in me the importance of faith. I would also like to dedicate this to my adviser, Jing Lin, and the professors of my graduate program, for exposing me to new worlds of inquiry and providing me with some of the tools necessary to explore those worlds. I will never forget my experiences here. Last (but far from least), I would like to dedicate this to my participants; none of this would have been possible without their willingness to share their stories.

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List of Acronyms

ARDC	African Refugee Development Center
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
EU	European Union
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement
LISA	Longitudinal Immigration Student Adaptation
NIS	New Israeli Shekel
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPF	National Patriotic Front
NSGB	National Status Granting Board
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PFDJ	People's Front for Democracy and Justice
PRC	People's Redemption Council
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
SES	Socioeconomic Status
SLM	Sudan Liberation Movement
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TP	Temporary Protection
TWP	True Whig Party
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	United Nations Mission in Darfur
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

Chapter 1

Beginnings

Background

During the 2008-2009 academic year, I was provided a fellowship to study in Cairo, Egypt. While there, I also taught both mathematics and English as a volunteer at a refugee services organization to several African refugees. As I got to know my students, I learned that the overwhelming majority of them felt alienated from Egyptian society. Many were frustrated at the treatment they received at the hands of Egyptians, at the lack of the economic opportunities afforded to them and the difficulty they had integrating into the communities in which they lived. I observed that the students who felt most isolated from Egyptian society were also least enthusiastic about learning and their ability to succeed in their country of residence. A number of these students resolved to leave Egypt for more developed countries, such as Israel, where they felt they would be better received and have greater opportunities for achieving self-sufficiency.

As a result of this volunteer experience, I began to think about acculturation and the role it serves in the experiences of African refugees. The fact that many of my students saw Israel as a place where they would not face many of the problems they faced in Egypt led me to take a closer look at the country and the situation of African refugees there.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will provide the context and justification for the study, followed by the research questions that guide my study. I will continue with a short discussion of the study's research design and limitations.

Statement of the Problem

Since its creation, Israel has welcomed and assimilated large numbers of immigrants. The large numbers of African refugees who have entered the country since 2005 represent a major demographic shift in terms of the geographical, religious, ethnic, racial, and political status make-up of the immigrant population (Hartman, 2011). While other groups have assimilated into Israel society, little is known about the situation of this new wave of migrants. Evidence from other nations suggests that the situation of African refugees represents a challenge to theories of acculturation that seemed to hold true for European populations (Shepard, 2008). Recent research on the acculturation of non-European migrants has shown that there are multiple paths this process can take. While some migrants do flourish, others become part of the underclass, exhibiting high levels of academic failure and low socioeconomic mobility (Shepard, 2008, p. xii).

While the government of Israel has refused to provide services to the growing numbers of refugees in the country, a few Israeli NGOs have started working to improve refugee access to health, work, and education services (African Refugee Development Center, 2011). Much of the education-related work of these organizations emphasizes language learning (of English or Hebrew), incorporating life skills, employment, and psycho-social support activities into their programs; such programs exist because service providers understand the role these different factors play in fostering the acclimatization of refugees into their new communities. Given the novelty of large numbers of African refugees in Israel and the relative inexperience of the NGOs working in this field, little research has been conducted to understand how African refugees are acculturating in Israel or whether current educational practices are helping to make refugee transitions easier.

Integrating African refugees into Israeli society is desirable for many reasons. First, these refugees bring a wealth of culture and experiences that can enrich Israeli society (Berry, 1997; Ogbu, 1991; Ogbu & Simons, 1997). A well-integrated and educated population has the potential of making significant social and economic contributions, especially in contrast to a marginalized population, which may end up draining many more of the state's resources. Also, there are fewer social concerns with a population that has integrated into Israeli society.

Lack of knowledge about the acculturation of African refugees into Israeli society could result in the situation worsening. This concern is aggravated by the knowledge that tensions are already high in Israel regarding this issue (Branovsky, 2010). The Israeli prime minister, for example, has voiced concerns that the numbers of Muslim and Christian refugees entering Israel from Africa could undermine the Jewish character of the state (Sobelman, 2010). Other politicians have begun referring publicly to the refugees as "infiltrators," accusing them of bringing crime and harassment to the country (Hartman, 2011; Tsurkov, 2010c). Recent political instability in both Egypt and Sudan as well as Israel's inability to secure its border effectively suggest the numbers of Africans entering Israel could rise even more dramatically, further necessitating research in this field.

Rationale for the Study

An ethnographic study can provide a better understanding of how African refugees in an adult language program are acculturating into Israeli society. The use of this methodology is appropriate when the need is "to describe how a cultural group works and to explore the beliefs, language, behaviors, and issues such as power, resistance and dominance" (Creswell, 2007, p. 70). The cultural group of interest in this study is adult African refugees participating in a language education program in Israel. Examining their beliefs, language, behaviors and the

issues they face can provide an indication of how they are acculturating to Israeli society as well as highlight some of difficulties associated with this process (Berg, 2009; Merriam, 2009).

While this study examines students from only one adult language program, it can offer insights into the larger problem of adult African refugee acculturation in Israel by providing a detailed analysis of several students' lives. Also, many teachers may not know how their students are acculturating or whether their activities are fostering positive acculturative outcomes; this study will provide an in-depth look at how students are responding to efforts to help them learn/acculturate.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this ethnographic study is to examine the manner in which adult African refugees in a language program are acculturating to life in Israel. Acculturation is defined as the process that occurs when members of one cultural group come into prolonged contact with members of one or more other cultural groups; the term encompasses the behavioral, psychological and physical changes that may occur as a result of prolonged contact with members of a different cultural group. This work examines the experiences and activities of several of these refugees and the perceptions of their teachers, revealing how the students respond to the host culture and depicting the educational activities that may have an effect upon the acculturation process of African refugees.

Research Questions

The central research question of my study is:

How are adult African refugees acculturating to life in Israel and how do language education programs influence this process?

Several sub-questions stem from the central question:

1. What characterize the social interactions African refugees have with Israelis and what support system are there to engage the Africa refugees in Israeli society?
2. What language, technical, or cultural skills do Africans have or lack, that enable them to participate more fully in the Israeli economy and society?
3. In what way is the language center helping African refugees to adapt to Israeli society?
4. What feelings do African refugees have towards Israel and Israeli people and how have those feelings changed over time?
5. What people, places, and activities in Israel are most important to African refugees and why?

Significance

This research contributes to an understanding of the acculturation process of adult African refugee English and Hebrew language learners in Israel, specifically, but also contributes to an understanding of how language education may influence refugee acculturation. It can also improve our understanding of how African refugees acculturate in developed societies, in general. Little research in this area has been conducted and not much is known about the needs, desires, hopes, dreams and frustrations of this refugee population, nor do we know what educational interventions can positively affect the acculturation process for future African refugees (Paige et al., 2000). Therefore, this research expands the current knowledge base by using a qualitative approach to identify factors and describe relationships among the factors that either contribute to or act as impediments to the successful acculturation of adult African refugees in Israel.

This research can inform both policy makers and those interested in refugee issues about the stumbling blocks to the successful integration of this population. A better understanding of these factors could lead to the changing of certain policies that impede the integration of this population into Israeli society. Such understanding has the potential to help ease social tensions between Israelis and Africans living in Israel and in turn may help create opportunities for refugees to make economic and social contributions to Israel. This is particularly important as recent events (the succession of Southern Sudan and revolutions throughout North Africa) may lead to an increase in the numbers of refugees fleeing to Israel. Additionally, this research could contribute to improving the teaching and administration of foreign language courses for adult African refugees at the research site as well as at similar sites throughout Israel.

Scope of the Study

While I hope this research can help us better understand the process of acculturation for African refugees in Israel, the scope of my research is narrower. This study focuses on the process of acculturation for adult Hebrew and English language learners, not the entire population of African refugees residing in Israel. I also do not expect my findings to be reflective of students studying other languages (Arabic, for instance), as the decision of which language to study could be influenced by several factors that play a role in the acculturation process (such as a person's perceptions of the chances of remaining in Israel). While my research was only conducted at one site in Tel Aviv, I do believe the experiences of my participants are reflective of the process of acculturation experienced by refugee language learners at other centers throughout the country.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of this study is that it does not encompass the full range of diversity of Africans in Israel or even of those participating in the language program. While I tried to select participants keeping in mind the proportional ethnic make-up of the classes and I used criteria for selecting participants from diverse backgrounds (with respect to nationality, gender and language proficiency), it was impossible to select participants reflecting every possible indicator of difference (religion, socio-economic status in country of origin, nationality, ethnic and regional identities, etc.). While I recognize this limitation, it is my hope that my research will help others to gain a better understanding of the perspectives of African refugees in Israel generally and that my findings will be transferrable to others whom I did not have the benefit of participating in the study.

Another limitation of this study is that there is no ideal language to conduct my research in. Most of the interviews I conducted were in English, as most of the participants had fairly high levels of English proficiency, the education center is a primarily English medium center and I am a native English speaker. That said, the refugees I worked with were native speakers of one of several different languages; even though they had at least an intermediate level of English proficiency, they may not have felt as comfortable communicating in English as in their native languages. Also, one is never sure if messages conveyed in a foreign language fully capture the meaning of one's first language. For those for whom English did not work as a medium of communication, I worked with an interpreter, which carries with it the possibility of mistranslation and misinterpretation.

The Researcher's Background

A level of subjectivity is inherent in any type of qualitative methodology. Recognizing this, it is important that I am explicit about the aspects of my background that led me to this research topic as well as some of the biases that might influence my interpretation of the data. I developed a passion for education serving as a teacher in the Peace Corps (PC) in East Africa. There, I saw that my work could address social problems stemming from economic disparities and improve quality of life for people.

My specific interest in African refugee education began while volunteering for a refugee organization in Egypt. It was here I saw that African refugees were discriminated against not only due to their refugee status, but also because of racist stigmas against Africans. Being African-American, I encountered such racism on several occasions and found the plight of many African refugees particularly troubling. This, coupled with the parallels I've drawn between the poor living conditions of refugees in other countries (such as Greece or South Africa), has spurred my interest in working with African refugees in Israel.

An examination of my background reveals several potential biases. First, I sympathize with the refugees I plan to work with. I tend to see the difficulties they may be having as stemming largely from society's perception of them and not out of the flaws that may reside within them; I am sure that many people feel that refugees are responsible for the hostile attitudes members of the host country may harbor against them and for certain societies' marginalization of them. Also, I view education as one of the main mechanisms for helping African refugees better themselves and achieve success in their host countries; more critical voices might view education as part of the problem as it can reinforce ideologies that do not empower or encourage those in the minority.

There are several aspects of my background that might have influenced the way my participants responded to me. First, as a native English speaker, I may have been in a position of power over my participants. Not only could I use the language more fluently than they could, but English is a language that has a high level of prestige both within Israel and the countries from which my student participants hailed. It is possible that my participants may have wanted to appease me or felt compelled to say things they believed I wanted to hear.

My status as an American may also have placed me in a position of power over my participants. Most of them expressed a desire to immigrate to the USA and wanted to know both how they could get to the US and whether I could help them. Although I tried to make it clear that I would not be able to get them to the US, they may have believed that by helping or appeasing me this would improve their chances.

In addition, my African-American background may have given me a level of access not enjoyed by other researchers. Many of my participants were very interested in learning about the experiences of African-Americans and I believe that the rapport between my participants and I may have been influenced by their feelings that we were similar.

I also believe that my status as a non-Jew may have prompted my participants to be more open in their criticisms of Israelis and Jews. Given that many of my participants were suspect of Israelis and associated Judaism with Israel, they may not have expressed their issues as openly with someone who identified with Israel.

Definition of Key Terms

Acculturation: The process that occurs when members of one cultural group come into prolonged contact with members of one or more other cultural groups. The process of

acculturation may lead to changes in behavior, psychology or physical appearance. For example, a person from East Africa who has immigrated to the United States would probably give up the custom of holding hands with friends of the same sex (behavioral change); become more accepting of performing duties associated with the opposite gender (psychological change); and begin to grow their hair longer during the winters (physical change). The process of acculturation may lead to socially desirable outcomes (such as the contributions the acculturating group can make to the host society's art or literature), but can also result in socially undesirable outcomes (such as the formation of gangs by youth of the acculturating group). Given that there are many domains through which acculturation may occur, in this study I focus on the different ways members of the acculturating group interact with members of the host society, view the host society, and participate in the host society's economy.

Adult: An individual in a community or society who is viewed by other members of that community/society as being independent and responsible. In many societies, adulthood is reached through the attainment of a certain age, but in other societies adulthood may be attained through a feat or ritual (such as the circumcision of boys in some tribes) or through a physiological change (such as the onset of menses in girls). In the context of the English language program where I conducted research, adult is defined as anyone who is too old to be eligible for the provision of educational services by the Israeli state (individuals 17 and over).

African: Although technically this term refers to anyone from the continent of Africa, it has a racial and cultural dimension that is important in the context of the Middle East. 'Black' sub-Saharan Africans are differentiated from Arabs, who make up the overwhelming majority of the population in North African countries (Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco) as well as significant proportions of some sub-Saharan countries (Sudan, Mauritania). It should be noted

that the distinction between North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa is contentious, however, as the nations that make up sub-Saharan Africa do not have a common linguistic, ethnic, religious or economic heritage. In the context of this study, the Africans that are the subject of my study are the non-Jewish Africans who have immigrated to Israel (to be distinguished from the Ethiopian Jewish community, most of whom are also recent immigrants).

Assimilation: The process that occurs when an acculturating group adopts the beliefs and practices of the host of society; this process results in the loss of the acculturating group's culture. A large proportion of Caucasians in the United States have assimilated into mainstream American culture, but have lost a connection to their ancestral origins.

Asylum-seeker: An individual who seeks refuge in a foreign country due to lack of security or fear of persecution in her country of origin. Asylum-seekers differ from refugees in that refugees have been formerly offered asylum by the host country, while asylum-seekers await an official decision.

Culture: The body of shared beliefs, values, behaviors, practices and attitudes that comprise an institution, organization or group. The notion of culture is flexible enough that it can refer to a very small group (such as a class) or a very large one (such as a national culture).

Economic Migrant: An individual who emigrates from one country to another in order to find employment or increased financial security. Economic migrants are considered to be making an economic choice, not one borne out of a fear of one's safety of security; thus, they are not afforded any protections by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Many refugees and asylum-seekers, however, also seek employment and financial security.

Integration: The process that occurs when an acculturating group enters the mainstream of the host society. This process entails that the acculturating group maintain its identity (as opposed to

assimilation) while at the same time engaging fully in the host country's social, political and economic life. The situation of the majority of recent Indian, Chinese and Italian immigrants to Canada has been cited as one example of integration; these immigrants have tended to maintain connections to their cultures of origin, and at the same time they work, live and have strong personal relationships with individuals outside of their ethnic group.

Internally displaced person (IDP): An individual who is displaced from his home, but who remains within the borders of his country of origin. IDPs are often referred to as refugees, though they do not technically fit the UNHCR's definition of a refugee.

Involuntary Minority/Migrant: Members of a minority group whose presence in a country occurred against their will (due to events such as slavery or war). Such minorities end up comparing themselves unfavorably with members of the dominant society and do not perform well academically with respect to the dominant group. An example of an involuntary minority group in the United States is African Americans (not be confused with African migrants, many of whom are voluntary minorities).

Marginalization: The process that occurs when an acculturating group is relegated to the fringes of the host society where it fails to participate fully in the social, political, or economic life of the host society. This results in the adoption of new cultural characteristics, but ones which put the acculturating group at odds with the host society. One example is the situation of indigenous children in Canada and Australia during the early 20th century, many of whom were taken from their tribal communities and educated in Western schools. They were prevented from practicing their tribal religions/beliefs or from using their native languages and, after completing their education, did not fit into either tribal society or the dominant western society.

Refugee: An individual who has been offered asylum by a country due to fear of prosecution or the lack of security in his country of origin. While refugees may be allowed to remain in a host country for the remainder of their lives, they are not considered citizens of that country and often do not have many of the rights and privileges afforded to citizens (such as the right to vote, access to health care, the ability to work, etc). The term refugee is often used to refer to both IDPs and asylum-seekers; its use is also contested by some critics, who believe that the determination of an individual's refugee status by governments and UNHCR is a very flawed and subjective process.

Separation: The process that occurs when the acculturating group maintains its culture, but there is little interaction between the host society's culture and the acculturating group's culture. An example of separation can be seen with the Indian diaspora in East Africa. Indians have been in East Africa for generations, but have maintained social and cultural ties to their ethnic communities in India; they have tended to marry within their cultural and religious groups in Tanzania, with many continuing to maintain linguistic ties as well.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): A United Nations (UN) agency mandated to protect and support "persons of concern," who include asylum seekers, internally displaced persons and refugees. The organization serves at the bequest of a national government or the UN and can assist in the repatriation (the settlement of an individual in her country of origin), local settlement (settlement of an individual into his current country of residence) or resettlement (settlement of an individual to a third country) of asylum-seekers or refugees.

Voluntary Minority/Migrant: A member of an immigrant minority group whose members immigrated to the new country because they believed the move would lead to better opportunities and economic well-being. According to Ogbu (1991), these minorities see the

barriers they face as temporary problems they can eventually overcome through hard work, increased education and the adoption of the dominant group's language and culture. One example of a voluntary migrant group is East Asians in the United States. Many East Asians have excelled both academically and professionally in the US and are associated with being a "model" minority group.

Dissertation Outline

The remainder of this dissertation is composed of eight chapters. In Chapter 2, I explain the situation of African refugees in Israel, focusing on the cultural, social, and legal issues that surround the issue. I then continue with an explanation of the theories that have influenced my understanding of acculturation and the role education may play in the acculturation process in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 explains my research methodology and provides a site and country background. Chapter 5 explains the organization of the sections presenting my findings. Chapters 6-8 are organized by geographic region and composed of the histories of the countries from which my participants come as well profiles for each participant. Chapter 9 consists of an interpretation of my findings as well as recommendations for educators and policy makers.

Chapter 2

Refugees Defined

This chapter discusses the context of African refugees in Israel. The first part of the chapter focuses provides a definition of the term 'refugee' as well as the manner in which I use the term. I begin by discussing the United Nations (UN) definition of a refugee and several of the limitations associated with this definition. I then propose a definition that may be more suitable to the population I hope to study and go on to examine the position of African refugees in the state of Israel (What protections are they afforded? What rights do they have?). The second part of the chapter focuses on the legal, social and cultural situation of African refugees in the Middle East, with an emphasis on Israel.

Who is a Refugee?

Origin of the term refugee.

The act of granting refuge to individuals or groups fleeing persecution in other lands stretches back thousands of years, practiced by empires such as the Hittites, the Ancient Egyptians and the Assyrians (UNHCR, 2012). The term refugee is derived from the French verb refugier, meaning to take shelter or to protect (Online Etymological Dictionary, 2010). The term originally meant someone seeking asylum and was first applied to the Huegenots, French Protestants who fled France near the end of the 17th century.

Before the 20th century, national borders through much of Europe were more porous and people seeking asylum from persecution were often absorbed by neighboring countries (Merriam-Webster, 2012). Conflict during the late 19th and early 20th centuries led to increasing numbers of people seeking asylum throughout Europe (The American-Israeli Cooperative

Enterprise, 2012a). For example, a number of anti-Jewish pogroms in Eastern Europe during this period led to the emigration of approximately 2 million Russian Jews while the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 displaced another 800,000.

After World War I and the formation of the League of Nations, an international effort to formalize refugee status. This was necessitated by the fact that many nations had begun to close their borders to unrestricted immigration. In 1921 Fridtjof Nansen was appointed as the first High Commissioner for Refugees (Fridtjof Nansen-Biography, 2012). The Commission was originally created to provide assistance to those fleeing the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the civil war that resulted from it. By 1923, its mandate had also expanded to help those fleeing the Armenian Genocide occurring in Asia Minor. The mandate of the Commission continued to expand over the next two decades in response to the various conflicts that arose. Under the Commission, refugee status was only accorded to groups for which the Commission had received a mandate. After 1930, members of these groups were issued League of Nations passports that allowed them to move freely across national boundaries.

World War II aggravated matters, in the aftermath of which there were more than 40 million refugees in Europe (Wasserstein, 2011). The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was created to provide support to areas formerly controlled by the Axis Powers and was intended to "plan, co-ordinate, administer or arrange for the administration of measures for the relief of victims of war in any area under the control of any of the United Nations through the provision of food, fuel, clothing, shelter and other basic necessities, medical and other essential services" (Agreement for UNRRA , 1946). Originally UNRRA's mandate allowed it only to support nationals of the Allied Powers (then referred to as the United Nations; the international body presently known as the United Nations was created in 1945); this was

expanded in 1944 to include "other persons who have been obliged to leave their country or place of origin or former residence or who have been deported therefrom by action of the enemy because of race, religion or activities' in favor of the United Nations" (Agreement for UNRRA , 1946). Not only did UNRRA operate in Europe, it also provided assistance in China and Taiwan. UNRRA was replaced by the International Refugee Organization (IRO) in 1947, an organization which lasted until the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was created in 1952. The organization continued the work of UNRRA, helping to repatriate or resettle millions of displaced people; controversially, IRO's constitution did not allow it to assist persons of German ethnic origin who had been (or were to be) expelled to the state of Germany (United Nations, 1948).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines a refugee as someone who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" (UNHCR, 2010). This definition was adopted by the United Nations (UN) through the approval of the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1967. The Protocol amended the earlier 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which limited the scope of a refugee to an individual whose circumstances had come about before 1951. The original intent of the Convention was to provide an internationally recognized mechanism for the mass migration of individuals in Europe as a result of World War II. The mandate was altered, however, with UN recognition that "new refugee situations have arisen since the Convention was adopted and that the refugees concerned may therefore not fall within the scope of the Convention" (Goodman-Gill, 2008, UN General Assembly, 1967, p. 267). The Convention and

Protocol were different from previous declarations as they specified the obligations of refugee host countries and enshrined these obligations into international law (Bourgonje, 2010, pp. 17-19).

The UN's definition of a refugee is now almost universally accepted as the technical definition of the term. As of October 2008, 147 states were a party to the Convention, the Protocol or both (UNHCR, 2010). It is also the definition employed by the UNHCR, the world's largest refugee organization. Although UN's definition is widely accepted, the process through which an individual gains refugee status is a complex process. A person (or group) seeking asylum becomes a refugee only when a country (and/or the UNHCR) accepts their claim. Refugee status determination (RSD) is the process through which those seeking asylum can become refugees, but only after a body determines if they fit the UN's definition. In principle, host country governments should conduct status determination proceedings in collaboration with and under the supervision of UNHCR (UNHCR, 2005, p.9-10). In many cases, however, the UNHCR makes a status determination and forwards its decision to a host country government, which then accepts the asylum seeker. RSD can be conducted individually or on a group basis. Individual RSD is the preferred method for granting refugee status, as it evaluates a case on its particular merits. Group RSD become necessary in the case of a mass influx of asylum seekers which make individual determinations impractical.

There are a number of rights accorded to those recognized as refugees by host country governments. Most of these rights stem from a combination of international human rights instruments and customary international law and therefore they apply to signatories of the Convention and/or Protocol as well as those which are party to neither (UNHCR, 2005).

Refugees enjoy protection against refoulement, or the forcible return to one's country of origin. Refugees are also protected from threats to their physical security, which includes prohibitions against torture and degrading treatment by officials; the host country is also expected to put in place measures to protect refugees from (primarily xenophobic or racially motivated) criminal violence. Refugees should have access to the court system, are entitled to freedom of movement (to the same extent of host country nationals) and are entitled to adequate education (at the primary level, at least). Additionally, refugees should receive assistance to cover their basic physical and material needs; these include food, shelter, and medical care. The host nation also has an obligation to issue identity documents and/or travel documents, which ensure that their rights are protected both in the host country and in countries party to the Convention and/or Protocol. When a refugee is particularly vulnerable, such as when a community may have been infiltrated by armed groups or when women and girls are at heightened risk of gender-based violence, the host government has a responsibility to put in place special protection measures.

Refugees are entitled to assistance with finding a durable solution to their situation. The most common solutions are voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement (UNHCR, 2005, p. 15). Voluntary repatriation is the return of a refugee to her country of origin once the situation is deemed safe for her return. Local integration is a process through which the refugee permanently settles in his host country (perhaps becoming a citizen). Resettlement is the transfer of refugees to a third country that agrees to accept them on a permanent basis. Of these options, voluntary repatriation is the most common solution and has been listed as the preferred solution in many UNHCR documents.

The Use of Temporary Protection.

Instead of the RSD process, some nations bestow temporary protection (TP) on groups of asylum seekers. A group that receives TP is given asylum in a country but does not undergo the RSD process. TP differs from refugee status in that the host country does not conduct RSD nor is it obligated to find a durable solution for those protected by TP. Utilizing TP is often employed by nations when events lead to large influxes of asylum-seekers for whom there is an unclear legal framework within which to justify accepting them (Fitzpatrick, 2000, p. 279-280). There is little international codification of TP, however, and countries have justified and employed TP differently. The United States, for instance, has used TP for persons deemed to be facing generalized danger (as opposed to individualized peril) and who are expected to remain for a limited period of time (Fitzpatrick, 2000, p. 285).

TP is controversial, finding both supporters and detractors among refugee advocates. Some advocates believe TP can be used by nations to provide support to asylum seekers who do not meet the criteria for refugees outlined by the UN (Fitzpatrick, 2000, p. 279-281). This was used by the United States when it accepted 130,000 Southeast Asians (South Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians) in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. On the other side of the debate are those who believe nations can use TP to circumvent RSD and thus avoid their obligations to legitimate refugees. Many European nations that accepted ethnic Kosovars and Bosnians during the Yugoslav Wars had the capacity to perform RSD, but opted to grant TP. There is also ambivalence regarding the formalization of TP. Some argue that the informal nature of TP allows countries greater leeway to act in a humanitarian manner. Their opponents believe that greater formalization of TP at the international level would encourage more nations to engage in the process and create a framework for holding nations accountable.

Difficulties Associated with the UN's Definition.

It is important to discuss some of the issues that arise regarding the UNHCR's definition of a refugee. The primary mechanism through which asylum seekers obtain the refugee designation is through a UNHCR process called refugee status determination (RSD). Not only do status determiners have to figure out whether (1) the conditions the asylum seekers fled led to a "well-founded fear of persecution," but they must also evaluate (2) the level of veracity of asylum seeker claims (Kagan, 2009, pp. 2-9).

Assessing whether an asylum seeker has a "well-founded fear of persecution" has been attacked because of the types of individuals current RSD practices often preclude. The RSD practice has been accused of being sexist because it does not recognize many types of gender-unique harm, such as female genital mutilation, forcible abortion, or honor killings; these are often inflicted by individual, as opposed to government, actors, but can be just as traumatic as more widely recognized traumas such as war (Bourgonje, 2010, p. 19). Other groups who have been hurt by the current process include victims of people trafficking, draft evaders, and military deserters (Kagan, 2009, p. 4).

When refugee status depends upon membership in a certain group, a status determiner may need to judge the veracity of an asylum seeker's claim of membership (Kagan, 2009). The difficulties associated with judging a person's veracity further complicate the RSD process. Kagan (2009) investigates the UNHCR Egypt's attempts to evaluate whether Eritrean asylum seekers are actually members of a minority being persecuted on religious grounds (including Christian Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses). The status determiners, who primarily work for secular governments or the UN, often resort to "forcing people to recite Bible citations, to

retell how and why they started going to one church instead of another, or to explain for the record why they pray in a particular way" (Kagan, 2009, p. 4). Kagan finds that adjudicators in this situation often end up either (1) testing the religious knowledge of the asylum seeker or (2) evaluating whether the asylum seeker actually believes what she is telling the adjudicator (2009, pp. 24-28). A test of religious knowledge favors those who are more educated (and can also be easily faked by someone who can memorize facts easily), while assessing whether an asylum seeker believes their claim puts much of the onus on a subjective adjudicator (who may be very ignorant of what it means to have religious experience or conversion).

The aforementioned issues call into question the current refugee determination process and the current way of defining a refugee. But there are a host of other problems with RSD that have little to do with legal definitions. In many countries, governments allow the local UNHCR to make that determination (Goodman-Gill, 2008; Kagan, 2009). The UNHCR is continually under-resourced, making processing very slow; in many cases, asylum seekers have been forced to wait years before being granted refugee status (Kagan, 2009). Often, potential asylum seekers do not know about nor have easy access to UNHCR offices, leaving them uncounted in official figures. In other countries, the host country takes the recommendation of the UNHCR under advisement, but makes its own status determination; this is the current situation in Israel (Goodman-Gill, 2008). This adds more time to the RSD, and often the host country may not agree with the UNHCR's claim (Goodman-Gill, 2008; UNHCR Israel, 2010).

Use of the Term "Refugee" in This Context.

Strictly speaking, the overwhelming majority of Africans in Israel are not refugees; instead, Israel has provided them with TP. As they have not been recognized as refugees by the

state of Israel, the state does not have a responsibility to find a durable solution for them. While the term refugee is not entirely appropriate, neither is any other term. They are not technically asylum-seekers as most have not been allowed to start the refugee determination process that identifies them as such. Many Israeli politicians say that the overwhelming majority of Africans are economic migrants, a claim which many Africans and human rights groups disagree with. Even the term "migrant" seems inappropriate, as many Africans claim that their stay in Israel is temporary and that they do not want to settle in the country. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of naming this group is that the reasons for their coming to Israel are very diverse, making any one designation inappropriate. I have chosen to use the word refugee to refer to the group collectively, however, as this is the term used by the African Refugee Development Center (ARDC), the advocacy organization which acted as the site of my study.

Towards Understanding the Situation of African Refugees in Israel

I also consider the political and social situation of African refugees in Israel and discuss what I've gleaned about the provision of education for them in Israel. Finally, I look briefly at the situation of African refugees living in Egypt, where African refugees have resided for a longer period of time, and draw connections between this situation and what may occur in Israel.

Ethiopians in Israel.

In order to understand the situation Israel currently faces, it is important to understand the factors that have led up to it. There are approximately 150,000 Ethiopians and their descendants living in Israel today (Bloom, 2009; Guarnieri, 2010). Though the Israeli government continues to airlift Jews from Ethiopia to Israel, they are not considered part of the new wave of African immigration that started in the second half of the last decade. My study focuses on the latter

group, though some understanding of the situation of Ethiopian Jews in Israel may be useful in putting the current wave of African immigration into context.

Efforts to bring the Ethiopian Jews, also known as Beta Israel, to Israel began in the 1970s. In 1975, the Chief Rabbinate officially recognized Beta Israel as belonging to the Jewish diaspora. Beginning in the early 1980s a series of airlifts were conducted by Israel and the United States to bring the Ethiopian Jews to Israel, who were seen by many Israelis as being a persecuted community within their native Ethiopia (Chen, 2011). The last of the major airlifts, Operation Solomon, which ended in 1991, brought 14,000 Ethiopians to Israel over the span of two days.

Although Beta Israel is officially recognized as having a claim to Israeli citizenship, there are a number of issues surrounding this community. The members of Beta Israel tend to be poorer and less educated than most Israelis; the incidence of poverty is three times as high for Ethiopian Jews than the average Israeli, for instance (Chen, 2011). Ethiopian youth are more likely to drop out of secondary school and are underrepresented at universities. Also, many Ethiopian Jews who immigrated as adults still have relatively low levels of Hebrew proficiency.

While many factors are responsible for the situation of Ethiopian Jews in Israel, there is evidence that racism has played a role. Before the airlifts, some Israelis believed Beta Israel to be culturally backwards and intellectually immature (The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 2012b). A writer for the World Zionist Organization, for example, wrote

> The reasons [for not bringing Ethiopian Jews to Israel] are simple and weighty. On one hand, they are well off where they are, while their development and mental outlook is that of children; they could fall an easy prey of exploitation, if brought here without any preparation. On the other hand, being a backward element, they would be and it would

> take several years before they could be educated towards a minimum of progressive thinking (The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 2012b).

In line with this thinking, Chen (2011) alleges that many Israeli employers will not hire Ethiopians due to beliefs that Ethiopians are underachievers and lazy. Also, there have been many incidences of Ethiopian students being placed in separate classrooms from other Israelis.

While some Ethiopian Jews in Israel have become successful, the trend is that the situation is getting worse (Chen, 2011). Israeli society remains divided on what can be done to reverse this trend and it is into this environment that the more recent wave of non-Jewish Africans has come.

Why and from where are the refugees coming?

Recent estimates put the number of non-Ethiopian Africans in Israel at 60,000 (Greenwood, 2012). The recent wave of immigration to Israel started in 2005, after tensions in Egypt led to an attack on 3,000 Sudanese protesters by Egyptian security forces in Cairo (Derfner, 2008; Harrell-Bond, 2006; Perry, 2010). Sudanese asylum seekers and refugees staged a protest in September of that year, in order to protest the UNHCR's lack of responsiveness to their petitions for asylum in Egypt as well as the lack of support the agency gave them for health, medical, and social services (Harrell-Bond, 2006). When the parties were unable to reach a resolution three months later, the UNHCR asked the Egyptian government to intervene. The brute force used by security forces to expel the protesters (using water cannons, pepper spray and sticks) gained international attention (as well as condemnation) and sent the message to many asylum seekers they would be better off seeking asylum elsewhere (Harrell-Bond, 2006; Heller, 2010).

More recently, Africans have been making Israel the first country to which they head upon leaving their home countries (Knell, 2010). Many have received word from friends and family members who have already migrated that life in Israel is better than that in other parts of the Middle East. Also, EU countries, such as Italy, have begun to eliminate sea routes that were popular for asylum seekers, making getting to Europe much more difficult for Africans. These factors, combined with the fact that political instability has increased in a number of sub-Saharan African countries, has made Israel much more desirable for African asylum seekers. Branovsky (2010) cites one refugee regarding the decision to emigrate to Israel, who argues: "We were always in Africa, so why did we come now and not a decade ago? Because there is a problem and people flee due to fear, not economic troubles. The economic situation in Sudan is better than here, and most of us were well-off before the war" (p. 1).

Of the Africans who have traveled to Israel after 2005, most are from either Sudan or Eritrea, with smaller numbers hailing from several Central African nations (Friedman, 2010). The refugees have been crossing illegally via the porous border with Egypt. Making it to Israel through Egypt is a very difficult and dangerous endeavor. In order to get to the Israel border, Africans must pay gangs of Bedouin transporters who often extort from them or their families large sums of money (BBC News, 2010). For those who cannot pay the sums, which are often increased en route, men and children can be held indefinitely and forced into slavery, while many women are sexually abused. If they make it to the border, Africans are routinely shot at by Egyptian security forces before making it to Israel (85 have been killed in this way since 2007); those who are captured by the Egyptian authorities are regularly beaten and arrested (Heller, 2010).

Although the Israeli authorities originally imprisoned Africans crossing via the land border with Egypt, public pressure spurred an end to this process and most of those crossing are set free after a short period of detention (The Washington Times, 2009). Some reports, however, now claim that Israel has been using "hot returns," the process of immediately forcing Africans back across the border (Knell, 2010). In spite of the danger and expense associated with traveling to Israel, several sources claim hundreds of refugees manage to enter the country over land each month (Derfner, 2008; Guarnieri, 2010; Knell, 2010).

Israel's response to African refugees.

The political response to the African refugees has been negative, though there are some protections in place to support them. Politicians, at the state and local levels, have primarily taken an antagonistic stance, portraying refugee migration as a negative phenomenon that must be stopped (Tsurkov, 2010c). While there are a number of forces pushing politicians to take action against the refugees, the state has been ambivalent in its actions (Derfner, 2008). The state is limited in its options, in part, because there are a number of legal protections in place to protect the refugees. Also, some sectors of Israeli society are against the expelling of the Africans for ethical and economic reasons (Derfner, 2008; Guarnieri, 2010).

National and local political responses to the issue.

Israel has been employing what Guarnieri (2010) refers to as a policy of deterrence: "It's being made clear by the authorities that they want to prevent more asylum seekers from coming, so they want to make the lives of those who have already come as hard as possible." With respect to the tens of thousands of Africans claiming asylum, the Israeli government maintains that the overwhelming majority of them are economic migrants (Heller, 2010; The Washington

Times, 2009). Economic migrants are not guaranteed protections under the 1954 Convention because their purpose in migrating to a country is motivated by a desire for economic gain, not fear of persecution.

For their part, Israel's politicians have been very vocal about their dislike of the current situation. Many publicly refer to the new wave of Africans as "infiltrators," a term derived from the 1954 Infiltration Law described earlier (Perry, 2010, pp. 162-163). In order to stem the tide of refugees crossing the border, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has ordered the construction of large fences along the Israeli-Egypt border (Lynfield, 2010). He has argued that the fences would not only prevent more economic migrants from entering Israel, but would also be a deterrent for terrorists trying to cross the border and would be a useful aid in the preservation of the Jewish character of the Israeli state (Lynfield, 2010; Perry, 2010, pp. 173-174). Also, in reference to a proposed more strict immigration law, Netanyahu has stated

> This (Jewish) majority is threatened by the increasing phenomenon of massive illegal infiltration onto our territory by illegal workers. This is a tangible threat to the future of the country. I ascribe historic importance to the proposed legislation [the more strict immigration law] because it is a key to the continuation of our being a Jewish and democratic country in the future (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010).

Not only has Netanyahu been a fierce supporter of keeping Africans out of Israel, but he is also working to remove those already in Israel. The Prime Minister has offered money to any African nation willing to take the refugees (Branovsky, 2010). He is also associated with the government's plans to build bigger detention centers, which will be used to house some of the refugees already in Israel (Gurvitz, 2010).

The Knesset (the legislative branch of the Israeli government) is also working to push through legislation that would make the 1954 Infiltration Law more draconian; it would call for the imprisonment of infiltrators (and Israelis who assist them) for up to seven years (Lendman, 2010; International Federation for Human Rights, 2008). This law is a part of a larger backlash against migrants; the Knesset is also debating a provision that would deport the children of 400 migrants in a crackdown on undocumented workers primarily from Asia (Migrants Rights, 2010).

The African "infiltrator" issue has also infected local politics. Some local politicians are calling for the Africans to be sent to a tent city (Tsurkov, 2010c). Others are pushing for laws that would prevent Israelis from renting to them or employing them (Sobelman, 2010). An extreme example of how local politicians are responding to the refugees comes from Eilat, an Israeli border town. In 2010, the mayor of Eilat launched a campaign to "save our city" from the African refugees (Friedman, 2010). As the "save our city" campaign did not spur the national government to action, Eilat's city council recently voted to shut down the city until the government resolves the issue (Hartman, 2011).

Why politicians want the refugees gone.

Given the animosity of politicians towards refugees, it is important to understand the factors motivating them. One of the major concerns is that the state does not have the capacity to accommodate all of the refugees who want to go to Israel (Heller, 2010). The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimates that 1,200 Africans enter Israel each month; if immigration were to continue at the present rate, this would lead to there being over 500,000 refugees in Israel within 15 years (Heller, 2010; Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010).

Israeli politicians have also been very keen to play to the public's fears. In response to Israeli concerns the Africans take jobs and housing, all the while spreading crime and disease, many local municipalities have passed ordinances to make it illegal to rent to refugees or give them work (Sobelman, 2010). One Eilat councilman argued that the council's decision to shut down the city stemmed from a desire to speak up for the people, as: "There is no one from the government taking care of the problem, it's left to the weakest people in Eilat to handle the problem" (Hartman, 2011). Some attribute Israeli fears to racist beliefs about people of color (Friedman, 2010; Tsurkov, 2010a; Tsurkov, 2010b). Irrespective of the actual causes of Israeli fears, many politicians have tended to cater to those fears (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010; Friedman, 2010; Tsurkov, 2010a; Tsurkov, 2010b).

Perhaps as a result of much of the rhetoric used by politicians against the Africans, politicians now worry that the xenophobia that has gripped many Israelis is becoming more violent (Heller, 2010; Levy, 2010; Sobelman, 2010; Tsurkov, 2010a; Tsurkov, 2010b). In one instance, several African men were forced to flee their home after it was torched (Sobelman, 2010). In another, a group of Israeli-born girls of African descent were beaten up while walking home from a Girl Scouts meeting. Netanyahu, in an effort to curb the violence, created a Youtube video declaring that "Citizens must not take the law into their own hands" (cited in Sobelman, 2010). Speeches like these do not seem to be helping, however, as these incidents seem to be getting worse (Sobelman, 2010).

Protections for refugees in Israel.

Although Israel is a party to both the UN convention and the protocol, the state does not recognize the overwhelming majority of Africans as refugees. Perhaps the most significant

protection is that of non-refoulement. While a 1931 Convention proposed an absolute prohibition on refoulement, the provision proposed by during the 1951 Conference of Plenitotentiaries allows countries to deny the right of non-refoulement to any refugees for which there are reasonable grounds for believing they would compromise the security of the state or who, after being convicted of a serious crime, are deemed to be a serious danger to the country (Goodman-Gill, 2008). This provision entitles countries to deny refugee status to those who are a threat to the security of the state, but gives little in the way of guidance for how this should be interpreted.

Although many writers do not make this distinction in their writing, there is a difference between a refugee and an asylum seeker. While a refugee has been given official recognition from the state, asylum seekers have petitioned, but still await, a status determination. Many countries allow the national UNHCR office to determine the merit of asylum applications, adhering to the office's decisions with respect to status determination. In 2003, Israel was the first country in the Middle East to develop its own procedures for refugee status decisions (Perry, 2010, p. 162). The UNHCR plays a supporting role, processing applications for asylum, conducting interviews and collecting data, and making recommendations to the Israeli government (The Washington Times, 2009; Perry, 2010, p. 162). The Israeli National Status Granting Board (NSGB) makes the final status determination, however. It is important to note that while officially recognized refugees are allowed to remain in a country indefinitely, they are not considered citizens of that country and are usually not accorded many of the same rights as citizens.

Israel has only officially granted refugee status to 170 people since 1951 (Perry, 2010, p. 163). Perry (2010) highlights several reasons why this is unlikely to change within the current system:

> First, asylum seekers in Israel have no meaningful right to representation by an attorney before either UNHCR or the NSGB. Second, all appeals are reviewed by the same bodies responsible for the initial decision, and unsuccessful applicants rarely are given detailed explanations for the rejection of their claims. Third, the diffusion of responsibility between UNHCR and the NSGB can lead to ambiguous standards and concomitant perceptions of unfairness, compounded by the reality that the number of claims submitted to UNHCR far exceeds its administrative capacities. Fourth, and most troubling, under the Asylum Regulations, many asylum seekers are classified automatically as enemy nationals based on their country of origin and, thus, never have the opportunity to avail themselves of even this minimally protective process (Perry, 2010, p. 163).

The Asylum Regulations to which Perry (2010) refers give Israel the right to refuse asylum to nationals of several nations deemed enemy states by the 1954 Infiltration Law, a law meant to secure Israel's borders during a state of emergency (p. 163). Technically, the law is compatible with the UN convention in that the convention allows for the denial of asylum to individuals deemed a threat to the state. As Sudan is one of the enemy states indicated by this law, Sudanese, who make up one-fourth of those seeking asylum in Israel, have been refused the right to apply for asylum.

Why Israel can't send them back.

Although there has been a lot of attention given to the problems the Africans cause, Israel is divided as to whether to send them back for several reasons. The main deterrent for the government is the amount of pressure being exerted by both domestic and international groups (Branovsky, 2010; Guarnieri, 2010). Many organizations, including the UNHCR, Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, and the Hotline for Migrant Rights, have spoken out against government plans to detain or deport the refugees. Not only have their actions led to public protests in Israel, but have brought unwanted attention to Israel internationally (The Washington Times, 2009; Guarnieri, 2010; Heller, 2010; Knell, 2010). The state is particularly shy of such attention, as it still faces criticism for its dealings with the Palestinians.

Many segments of the public feel a moral obligation towards the African refugees. Not only are people sympathetic to the plight of many of those who come to Israel to escape persecution and find a better life, but there is also an Israeli collective memory of the Holocaust and Jewish persecution that has been compared to the experiences of these refugees. In fact, comparisons of the genocide in Darfur with the Holocaust has led the government to grant citizenship to 600 Darfurians since 2007 (Prusher, 2007; The Washington Times, 2009).

One other cause for Israel's hesitancy to act is that many proposed actions lack legal clarity (Perry, 2010). When news reached the public that the Interior Ministry imprisoned several unaccompanied minors in 2009, lawyers at the Ministry of Justice filed papers disputing the legality of such action (Guarnieri, 2010). In another example, an Israeli judge overturned the Interior Ministry's decision not to grant asylum to a Sudanese man who had been rejected for not being able to speak Arabic and not knowing many facts about Sudan; the judge argued that these

were not reasonable grounds for judging an asylum claim as the man was not a native Arabic speaker and had lived his entire life in his village, facts that explained why he knew little about many parts of Sudan (Sobelman, 2010).

If the Israeli government were to take more extreme actions, such as forcibly repatriating refugees, this could result in additional legal interventions. In fact, even though the government maintains the overwhelming majority of refugees are economic refugees, a recent Knesset report has said that both Sudanese and Eritrean refugees (almost 20,000 people) cannot be returned to their home countries because they would be at risk of harm if repatriated (Freidman, 2010). Perry (2010) is only one of several legal scholars who question the international legality of Israel's actions towards refugees in light of the 1954 Convention and 1967 Protocol; if the state were to engage in other questionable practices this could lead to punitive actions by other nations or multilateral agencies.

Another reason the government may be cautious about acting is that many activists challenge the claims politicians are using to justify expelling the refugees. Tsurkov (2010a; 2010b; 2010c), for example, points out that the argument that Africans take jobs from Israelis is unfounded; instead, she is able to find sources who argue that migrant workers can be an engine for economic growth. The claim that Africans bring crime is also untrue. A new report by a Knesset research center suggests that crime has not risen as a result of African refugees, who tend to exhibit lower crime rates than Israelis living in the same cities (Tsurkov, 2010b). Some refugee advocates see many of these claims as public manifestations of racism and xenophobia. Israel Nahari, the manager of a school for African refugees in Eilat, argues that it is these two

factors that have motivated the members of the town to post red flags in front of Eilat businesses that employ Africans:

> I say it very much resembles what the Nazis did in the 1930s, when they put up signs reading "Achtung Juden" to warn people of the presence of Jews…There is a great deal of opposition to the refugees in Eilat, mixed with a great deal of racism. Because at the end of the day, they don't bother people much. People in Eilat say the Africans bring diseases, or that every day a 'near rape' happens. Up until today, there hasn't been a single rape here, but every day there's nearly one? What does this mean? (Hartman, 2011).

While many activists are calling attention to much of the prejudice and misinformation against refugees, those in power have not been attentive to these concerns (Gurvitz, 2010). This raises fears that, in spite of the advocates, Israel may still make rash attempts to get rid of the Africans (Gurvitz, 2010; Sobelman, 2010).

Many businesses also want the refugees to stay in Israel. This is primarily because the Africans provide a plentiful source of cheap labor that is willing to perform many menial jobs Israelis are unwilling to do (Hartman, 2011; Illegal African migrants present quandary for Israel, 2010). Many in the tourism sector see Africans as a suitable replacement for Palestinian workers, who, due to tightened security measures are unable to cross into Israel (Illegal African migrants present quandary for Israel, 2010). Some in Eilat fear that the hotel industry would fail without the presence of Africans. According to the director of the Eilat hotel association, the removal of Africans would have far reaching consequences:

> If tomorrow, the state were to kick out all of the refugees from the hotels without any sort of alternative presented, the hotels would collapse. If there aren't workers, instead of getting your room at 2 pm, you'd get it at 7 pm. The level of service would hurt so badly that some hotels would have to close entire floors. This would not only hurt migrants, but also many Israeli employees of hotels who would be laid off. (Hartman, 2011).

While this may have been an exaggeration, this quote reflects the opinions of many business owners and managers who see refugees as being integral to many parts of Israel's economy.

That said, it is impossible to know the true effects of refugees on Israel's economy and many refugee advocates are opposed to the exploitative salaries paid to refugees who have no other means of getting income (Branovsky, 2010).

Education for African refugees in Israel.

As I mentioned earlier, most refugees must rely on NGOs for the provision of educational services. While foreign governments and the UNHCR help to fund educational programs and social services for the refugees, direct interaction with the refugees has been limited (Paz, 2011). Many of the educational services focus on building foreign language (English or Hebrew) skills or require some level of foreign language fluency (African Refugee Development Center, 2011). Those programs which do not teach language skills tend to provide refugees with vocational skills they can use to find employment.

While Israel does not provide education services to adults, the state is required to provide services to refugee children by law (Derfner, 2008; Wurgaft, 2008). Although the government stands by this provision, it has been silent regarding what type of education the children receive

and in what context. The Israeli border town of Eliat, for example, forces its Sudanese children to study in Sudanese-only schools, segregating the children from their Israeli counterparts (Wurgaft, 2008). These children do not learn from Israeli syllabi, but instead study from a special "framework." The reason the town is able to behave in such a manner is that no policies exist regulating the education of these refugees in Israel. According to the mayor,

> It's [Eliat's] policy of segregating school children is not a solution, it's a statement. A statement that I'm not willing to have permanent arrangements here for a population that lacks a permanent solution. The kindergartens are separate, too. They are not integrated into the municipal kindergartens. Everything is temporary and unclear. If a foreign worker loses his job, he can take his family and return to his home country. A Sudanese worker, by contrast, whom the hotel decides to lay off, becomes a resident with unclear status and I am forced to contend with yet another social welfare case (Wurgaft, 2008).

The manager of one school for refugees in Eilat admits that the education the children receive is beneficial, but nowhere near the quality received by children in Israeli schools. "To tell you that we're reaching academic achievements here….we're really not. But we're giving them an educational framework, teaching them how to learn together, study together, work together, live together" (Hartman, 2011).

The Ministry of Education, for its part, argues that such segregational policies are in line with international conventions, which oblige Israel to provide all children in its jurisdiction with an education equal to that of local children. It argues that "the frameworks and curricula are adapted to children's needs…including frequent shifts in the student population, lack of knowledge of the language and difficulty with basic educational skills such as reading and

writing in any language" (Wurgaft, 2008). This policy, if not rescinded, could further marginalize refugee children, who end up not being socialized in the same environment as Israeli children in the same cohort. Research by Human Rights Watch (2001) supports this conclusion, showing that the segregation of Jewish and Arab students in Israel has led to a gross inequality in the distribution of resources that favors Israeli children.

Summary

This section of the chapter has examined the situation of African refugees in Israel, focusing on the legal status of the refugees, some of the political, social and economic obstacles they face, and touching upon the (lack of) provision of educational services offered by the state. It is in this context that I attempt to understand the factors influencing the African refugee acculturation process.

Chapter 3

Understanding Acculturation

In this chapter I discuss the literature that has influenced my thinking about the acculturation of refugees. The first part of this chapter provides a definition of acculturation and a short history of how conceptual understanding of acculturation has changed. I then discuss Berry's (1997) Acculturation Model and some of the responses to it. I examine Ogbu's (1991) Cultural Model of minority education and then some of the research connecting language learning to acculturation. Finally, I offer hypotheses on how my participants are acculturating to Israeli society based upon these theories.

Evolution of the Conception of Acculturation

Although acculturation is generally understood as the process that occurs when members of one cultural group come into prolonged contact with members of one or more other cultural groups, definitions of acculturation have changed and expanded significantly since the term was first coined. Acculturation was first coined by JW Powell in 1880, who defined acculturation as "the psychological changes induced by cross-cultural imitation" (Acculturation, 2012). For Powell and others at the time, immigrants were the only ones to acculturate and the objective of the process was to understand and imitate as much of the new society's culture as possible.

The earliest theories of acculturation reflected Powell's thinking, depicting the process as one sided and linear (Acculturation, 2012). In 1914 Park proposed a model of acculturation composed of three stages: contact, accommodation, and assimilation (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 37). Immigrants' contact with the dominant culture leads them to accommodate the culture in order to minimize conflict. Accommodation of the dominant group continues, fostering the

cultural assimilation of the immigrant group and eventually leading to intermarriage and the blending of the immigrant group into the dominant society.

A model proposed in 1936 by Redfield, Linton, and Herskovitz recognized the importance of accommodation in understanding how different cultural groups interact, but argued that accommodation was not inevitable; for Redfield et al. (1936), continuous first-hand contact between members of different cultural groups was necessary for acculturation to occur (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 37-38). In the 1950s the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) proposed an expanded definition of acculturation suggesting that there are many facets that are amenable to change and that these have an influence on how a given individual responds to a new culture. Not only are some facets more resistant to change (such as one's value system), but there is some element of choice in the process (i.e., the individual may choose which elements of their culture to preserve and which to change/adapt).

In 1974 Teske and Nelson emphasized the psychological aspect of acculturation, seeing the process as including elements "changes in material traits, behavior patterns, norms, institutional changes, and importantly, values" (Padilla & Perez, 2003, p. 37). Berry (1980) added to Teske and Nelson's conception by identifying four acculturation strategies, suggesting that the process is reversible and recognizing that language can play a role in the acculturation process. Berry's definition recognized that acculturation is a two-way (or multi-way, if more than two cultures are interacting), nonlinear process (Acculturation, 2012; Berry, 1997; Gibson, 2001; Kuhlman, 1991).

Berry's Model of Acculturation

Acculturation, as Berry (1997) sees it, "comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous contact with

subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups" (Berry, 1997, p. 7). While there may be changes to both groups as a result of the interaction of these cultures, usually one group is more dominant and tends to change less than the other (Berry, 1997, p. 7). The group which exhibits the greatest amount of change is called the acculturating group. In plural societies, societies in which there are multiple cultural groups, each group (and the individual members therein) can adopt acculturation strategies with respect to two different issues they face on a daily basis. First, they must decide on the level of cultural maintenance, the striving to maintain one's cultural identity and characteristics they hold. They must also decide on how much to engage or withdraw from other cultural groups, referred to as the level of contact and participation (Berry, 1997, p. 9).

Minority group acculturation styles.

An individual's (or cultural group's) behavior with respect to cultural maintenance and engagement with other groups can result in one of four different acculturation strategies. For acculturating groups, the decision not to maintain cultural identity while also seeking to engage with other cultures in society is an assimilation strategy. An example of assimilation is the case of European immigrants to the United States from the late 19th century through the middle of the 20th century. During this period, tens of millions of individuals immigrated from a variety of nations (including Greece, Italy, Hungary and Poland). While they brought their languages and cultures with them, many of the descendants of these immigrants have tended to intermarry (with people from different cultural backgrounds), have not preserved the languages of origin and do not live in ethnic enclaves with others from their cultural group.

The opposite situation, when a group maintains its identity but does not engage other cultures, is a separation strategy. An example of a separation strategy is the situation of members of the Indian diaspora in East Africa. Large numbers of Indians were originally brought to East Africa (Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda) by the British as indentured laborers to build the Kenya-Uganda Railway. Several thousand of those laborers remained in East Africa (and were later joined by waves of Indians from other ethnic groups), but maintained social and cultural ties to their ethnic communities in India. Indians have tended to marry within their cultural and religious groups in Tanzania, with many continuing to maintain linguistic ties as well.

Integration is the result of choosing to maintain one's culture while also engaging other cultures. Mehrpouya (2006) cites the experiences of many recent Indian, Chinese, and Italian immigrants to Canada as examples of integration. While many maintain connections to their cultures of origin, large numbers work, live and have relationships with individuals outside of their ethnic group (p. 5-8). Mehypouya attributes this phenomenon to Canadian public opinion and immigration policy, which have been multiculturally oriented since 1971.

The last strategy, marginalization, is the lack of maintenance of one's culture and the lack of engagement with the dominant culture. This is probably the rarest acculturation strategy. One example is the situation of indigenous children in Canada and Australia during the early 20th century. Many were taken from their tribal communities and placed in (primarily) church- or government-run schools. They were prevented from practicing their tribal religions/beliefs or from using their native languages. Once these children were released many had lost touch with their cultural origins, but also did not fit into the culture of the White majority. Berry uses the

term "strategy" to refer to the ways in which groups acculturate, a term which suggests that individuals choose how they acculturate; it is important to note that Berry does not believe that marginalization is a chosen strategy, rather it often results when the dominant society tries to force a group to assimilate that is resistant to giving up its culture of origin (Berry, 1997).

A graphical representation of Berry's model is in Figure 1.

	Cultural Maintenance = YES	Cultural Maintenance = NO
Contact Participation = YES	Integration	Assimilation
Contact Participation = NO	Separation	Marginalization

Figure 1: Berry's Acculturation Model

Host country determinants.

As Berry (1997) points out, a cultural group's strategy may not be completely self-determined; the other, the dominant group/culture, heavily influences the options the acculturating group has (pp. 9-10).

> When the dominant group enforces certain forms of acculturation, or constrains the choices of non-dominant groups or individuals, then other terms need to be used. Most clearly, people may sometimes choose the Separation option; but when it is required of them by the dominant society, the situation is one of Segregation. Similarly, when people choose to Assimilate, the notion of Melting Pot may be appropriate; but when forced to do so, it becomes more like a Pressure Cooker. In the case of Marginalization, people rarely choose such an option; rather they usually become marginalized as a result of attempts at forced assimilation combined with forced exclusion; thus no other term seems to be required beyond the single notion of Marginalization (Berry, 1997, p. 10).

One distinction that may elucidate the role of the host society in the acculturation process is that between segregation and separation. The difference between separation and segregation is that separation suggests that the assimilating group chooses not to accept the dominant culture, while segregation suggests that the dominant culture excludes the minority group (through legal mechanisms, social behaviors or both). An example of a segregation strategy is exemplified by the situation of African-Americans in the United States after the abolishment of slavery. During this period many laws were put in place to limit access to institutions reserved for Caucasians and policies enacted to affect African-Americans' abilities to vote, choose where they lived and access education, among other things. This fostered the development of separate institutions (such as churches and schools) for African-Americans, as well as cultural differences (including the development of different styles of music and vocabulary).

Berry argues that several acculturation strategies are dependent upon societal or group characteristics. One acculturation strategy, integration, is only possible when the dominant society is open and inclusive. Acculturation strategies are also dependent upon the preferences of the acculturating group. Some acculturation strategies are collective, dependent upon the desire of the overall group to pursue them (Berry, 1997, p. 11). Integration and separation are collective, as one cannot maintain one's culture without the presence of others who also want to share that culture.

Other factors related to acculturation.

After describing the acculturation strategies an individual or group can adopt, Berry (1997) provides a framework for understanding what factors lead to different acculturation styles among individuals. He classifies these factors into three overarching categories: group level

factors, moderating factors prior to acculturation and moderating factors during acculturation (Berry, 1997, pp. 14-16). Group level factors are those that apply to the acculturating group overall and are due to the group's society of origin, the group's society of settlement and the group-level changes that occur as a result of migration to the new society (such as adapting to new dietary restrictions or opportunities and needing to communicate in different languages).

Moderating factors prior to acculturation are those factors which existed prior to entering the society of settlement and may differentiate members of the same acculturating group from one another; these factors include age, gender, migration motivation, religion, and individual personality, among other things. One would expect, for example, that an elderly Muslim woman from Egypt would have a very different acculturative experience than a young Christian man from Egypt.

Moderating factors during the process of acculturation are those factors which are particular to an immigrant's life in the new society. These factors include the level of social support an individual has, the amount of prejudice and discrimination an individual has experienced, and the amount of time the individual has been in the host society. For example, an individual who migrates to a country where he has social and familial connections and who has not experienced severe forms of discrimination will have a very different experience that someone who migrates and is isolated and has had experienced abuse or severe discrimination.

Responses to Berry's model.

A number of scholars have suggested revisions to Berry's model. Kuhlman (1991) believes Berry's model is incomplete as it "is not intended for analyzing economic variables,

which…are a crucial dimension in Third-World refugee problems" (p. 6). Kuhlman argues that refugees cannot integrate or assimilate into a society unless they are able to fully participate in the host country economy in ways that utilize their skills and provide a standard of living that meet culturally determined minimum expectations (p. 7).

Schwartz, Montgomery and Briones (2006) argue that personal identity provides an anchor to minorities during the acculturation process. They identify personal identity as a set of "coherent and self-constructed dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and personal history" that "functionally guides the unfolding of the adult life course" (Schwartz et al, 2006, p. 5). In this model, it is personal identity that mediates any psychological difficulties an individual may face as she attempts to adjust to the conflicting expectations and beliefs of the two cultures (the host country and immigrant cultures).

Berry's model has also been subject to a number of criticisms. Hunt, Schneider, and Comer (2004) argue that acculturation is used more as a stereotyping variable in research than as a well-defined construct. They call attention to the lack of theoretical clarification on "what constitutes a culture, which traits pertain to ethnic [minority] versus 'mainstream' culture, and what cultural adaptation entails" (Hunt et al, 2004, p. 973). They find that much of the scholarship on acculturation in the US has focused on a very small portion of ethnic minority groups, implicitly defining acculturation as a minority group's progression from employing traditional beliefs and practices to the adoption of more Western ones.

Bhatia and Ram (2001) argue that "culture" is a heavily contested term which simplifies what is a very complex and fluid phenomenon. Influenced by postmodernism, they see notions of one's 'self,' 'identity,' and 'culture' as being constituted by historical, political and social

forces that are continually at work; an individual's identity and culture are therefore not fixed nor can they be objectively studied. Using a narrow framework to understand acculturation is problematic, therefore, because it "overlooks the contested, negotiated and sometimes painful, rupturing experiences associated with 'living in between' cultures" (Bhatia & Ram, 2001, p. 14).

The benefits of integration.

The criticisms of Berry's model notwithstanding, some research suggests that higher levels of integration are positive for a society/community as well as for those acculturating to a new environment. A meta-analysis of the incidences of crime in major metropolitan areas of the US by Crutchfield, Geerkin, and Gove (1982) shows that urban areas with greater levels of migration are correlated with higher incidences of crime. The authors argue that higher migration rates lead to less social integration, which suggests that lower levels of social integration in a society may lead to higher crime rates. Seeman (1996) also conducts a meta-analysis of research studies examining the role of social integration in health. He finds that social integration is associated with improved mental health as well as lower mortality risks (among those who have integrated). Based on interviews with Russian speaking immigrants to New Zealand, Stevens, Masgoret and Ward (2007) find that their participants tend to adopt either an acculturation strategy of integration or an acculturation strategy of separation; those who adopted the former strategy tended to be happier and more successful (in finding meaningful employment and learning English) than their counterparts (pp. 193-195).

Theories of Education and Acculturation

Although I find Berry's (1997) model very useful in understanding the ways in which refugees may respond to their host society, his model does not draw a connection between education and the acculturation of refugees. The work of John Ogbu (1991), however, shows how acculturation and educational performance may be related. This section discusses some of the literature examining the relationship between educational performance and acculturation, with an emphasis on Ogbu's work. First, I explore several of the theories of educational difference between members of the dominant group and cultural minorities, and provide some of the criticisms of them. Then I describe Ogbu's Cultural Model, his explanation of the educational disparities between minorities and the dominant group. Finally, I discuss the issues this model fails to address.

Models of educational difference and the criticisms of them.

One theory attempting to explain differences in educational performance argues that such differences are due to genetic differences between populations. This view, advocated by Jensen (1960), suggests that some minorities perform less well than their counterparts because they have lower levels of intelligence. This might explain why, in the United States, Blacks do less well than Whites while those of East Asian descent tend to do better academically. This theory is problematic because it cannot explain why some groups tend to do better academically in some societies than in others (Ogbu, 1991). For instance, in Japan, the Bukaru and those of Korean descent are minorities that do less well academically than non-minority Japanese (Shimahara & Kono, 1991). In the USA, however, non-minority Japanese do not perform any better than these other groups. Another issue with this theory is that it does not take into account differences in

academic performance between subpopulations within racial groups. African Americans who are the descendants of slaves in America, for instance, show lower levels of academic success than more recent African Immigrants, even though the former group is more closely related to the majority population (due to the intermixing of different racial groups in America over many generations; Rong & Brown, 2001).

Another theory of educational difference is that cultural and language differences create conflicts that retard the learning/teaching process (Erickson, 1987; Irvine, 1989). This would explain why recent immigrants from Latin America have more trouble excelling in their classes than native English speakers. The theory fails to explain, however, why some linguistic and cultural minorities do better academically than the average American student (Ogbu, 1991). Many East Asian immigrants, for instance, do excel academically even though they also have linguistic and cultural barriers to overcome. In addition, this theory does not account for the fact that many recent immigrants do better than minorities who have been in the US for generations. Matute-Bianchi (1991), for instance, conducted a qualitative study of the academic performance of students of Mexican descent and found that the more successful students tended to associate themselves more with their Mexican heritage and culture than the lower performing students. Many of the academically oriented students were native Spanish speakers and had immigrated more recently to the US, while the lower performing students tended to be native English or bilingual students.

The third explanation of differences in academic performance between racial groups is that these differences are due to differences in socioeconomic status (Bond, 1981). This would explain why some groups (such as Blacks and Latinos) that, on average, have a lower socioeconomic status (SES) than Whites tend to also do worse in school than groups that have a

higher SES (such as Whites). The problem with this theory, however, is that some minorities still do worse than their non-minority counterparts after controlling for SES (Ogbu, 1991).

The cultural model.

Ogbu (1991) believes that the keys to understanding differences in educational performance among different minority groups in a society are the historical forces that created those groups. Some minorities are voluntary minorities, minorities who immigrate to a country because they believe the move will lead to better opportunities and economic well-being. "These expectations continue to influence the way they perceive and respond to treatment by members of the dominant group and by the institutions controlled by members of the dominant group" (Ogbu, 1991, p. 8). Other minorities are involuntary minorities, minorities who are forcibly brought to a society through conquest, colonization, or slavery. "They usually resent the loss of their former freedom, and they perceive the social, political, and economic barriers against them as part of their undeserved oppression" (Ogbu, 1991, p. 9).

Both voluntary and involuntary migrants experience discrimination. They may face social and political barriers to advancement and may also be relegated to menial jobs. Some experience what is known as a job ceiling, the "formal statutes and informal practices employed by member of the dominant group/Whites to limit the access of Blacks to desirable jobs, to truncate their opportunities and to narrowly channel the potential returns they can expect from their education and abilities" (Ogbu, 1991, p. 10). Although both voluntary and non-voluntary minorities face discrimination, each group responds differently to it.

Voluntary minorities, or migrants, see the barriers they face as temporary problems they can eventually overcome through hard work, increased education, and the adoption of the dominant group's language and culture (Ogbu, 1991, pp. 8-9). These minorities often contrast

their present situation with their lives before immigrating. Contrasting the two situations, immigrants come to the belief that they and their children are better off in the host country and feel that any difficulties or discrimination they face stems from their foreigner status. These minorities see the differences between themselves and the dominant group in society as existing before the groups came into contact. As they see the problems they face as being temporary (reversible through hard work and acculturation), they have faith in the dominant culture's institutions (such as the education system) and work to overcome their difficulties through those institutions. East Asians immigrants to the United States are an example of a voluntary minority. They are associated with very high academic performance and a willingness to conform to mainstream societal norms.

Involuntary minorities, on the other hand, do not have a homeland to which they can compare their lives to. Instead, they end up comparing themselves unfavorably with members of the dominant society (Ogbu, 1991, pp. 8-9). They associate their lack of success with their racial or social status and do not believe they can get ahead through educational attainment and hard work. As opposed to migrants, involuntary minorities see the differences between themselves and the dominant group as stemming from the contact between themselves and the dominant group. Thus, they define themselves in opposition to the dominant group and endeavor to maintain their linguistic and cultural differences. African Americans in the United States are an example of an involuntary minority. They are associated with low educational outcomes and developing a counterculture that resists mainstream societal norms.

It is the different perspectives these groups have towards the dominant society that shapes their educational practices. While both voluntary and involuntary minorities say that doing well in school is important, voluntary minorities enforce very strict sanctions against members of the

community who fail to achieve academically. As they do not entirely believe education will lead to success, involuntary minorities do not enforce similar sanctions; instead, they usually view collective action as the primary avenue for obtaining political and economic resources (Ogbu, 1991; Ogbu & Simons, 1997). Examples of such collective action include both protesting and forming organizations to protect the rights of the group. Involuntary minorities also attempt to garner/define success through non-educational outlets. Many seek status through athletics, entertainment, and informal/illegal activities.

Concerns with Ogbu's model.

Although Ogbu's cultural model does resolve the issues expressed by other theories of educational difference, there are two concerns I have with the model. First, the model defines involuntary minorities as those who were brought to a society by conquest, colonization or slavery; there are, however, minorities who exhibit the characteristics of involuntary minorities but who were not brought to the host country through conquest, colonization or slavery. Many students of Mexican descent (or their parents or grandparents), for instance, arrived in the US through immigration and do not perform as Whites in the US (Matute-Bianchi, 1991). This situation is complicated by the fact that some Mexican-descent students adopt immigrant-like behaviors, while others adopt involuntary minority-like behaviors. Matute-Bianchi (1991) finds that Mexican-descent students' association with a homeland (Mexico) is the primary determinant in the educational behavior patterns they adopt.

A second concern is that Ogbu's model is unclear is with respect to refugees. Given that millions of refugees immigrate to new countries each year, any model dealing with the acculturative tendencies of immigrants should account for this group. Aspects of the refugee experience, however, fit Ogbu's definitions for both involuntary and voluntary minorities. As

refugees are displaced by some sort of conflict, their immigration to a new society can be seen as involuntary. On the other hand, many refugees, such as those who choose to immigrate to developed countries (such as Israel) as opposed to countries closer to their homelands, do choose to relocate to places they feel can offer them better lives and greater opportunities. Luciak's (2004) examination of the status of minorities is inconclusive, but suggests that refugees "that have in the past experienced subordination in their respective societies and developed an oppositional cultural frame of reference have greater difficulties crossing cultural and language boundaries, which normally would foster their schooling" (p. 366). Assuming Ogbu would accept this, I am not sure how he could incorporate Luciak's (or others') perspectives into his current model without major revisions.

Education for employment.

Although Ogbu does not specifically classify refugees into either the voluntary or involuntary group, research suggests they resemble voluntary minorities in at least one respect: refugees "believe school success determines later success in the job market" (Ogbu, 1991, p. 17). Refugees desire the skills that will afford them access to well-paying jobs and higher social standing and see education as necessary to accomplish these goals (Stevens, Masgoret & Ward, 2007; Naidoo, 2009). The desire to achieve academic and (subsequently) economic success is so great that such groups will adapt to host country norms even when those norms go against their own cultural values (Ogbu, 1991).

The idea that refugees believe that education leads to economic success is supported by the work of Hatoss and Huijser (2010), who examine the perspectives of Sudanese refugees who have been relocated to Australia. While the primary intent of Hatoss and Huijser's (2010) work is to examine gender differences regarding education, they have a number of other interesting

findings. Not only did Sudanese refugees express a need to find work to support themselves, they felt a strong obligation to send money to their family members and countrymen who remained in Sudan (Hatoss & Huijser, 2010, pp. 154-157). The informants also viewed education as the primary vehicle for acquiring work and being successful in Australian society; thus, many were highly motivated to acquire as much education as possible. Not only does Hatoss and Huijer's work show the emphasis refugees place on becoming educated, it also highlights the willingness of refugees to adapt to a host culture. The refugees in their study were acutely aware of the differences between their societies of origin and the host society, but seemed to be willing to try to adapt to the new society's expectations. Although it had been anathema for men to help their wives with housework in Africa, some explained that they had begun to assist with some chores. Also, mothers recognized the need for their daughters to go to school, even though they had not been expected to in Africa.

Although refugees may view education as a source of economic empowerment, this perspective does not necessarily correspond to their reality. Greg and Gow's (2005) study of Sudanese youths' schooling experiences in Australia finds that the students had very high academic and professional aspirations, which would allow them to contribute to their families (both living in Australia as well as back in Africa) and society. The authors note, however, that the Sudanese students' educational expectations were far higher than their teachers felt they were academically ready for and that the type of education they were receiving was not intended to prepare them for the high status professions they desired.

Finding employment can be difficult even for those who have expertise in their country of origin. In a study of the experiences of refugee families living in Canada with preschool

children, Dachyshyn (2007) identifies several problems these families faced in trying to acclimate to Canadian society. Before displacement, many of her respondents lived in relatively comfortable situations, but were having a very difficult time finding employment that would afford them a similar standard of living in Canada; in part, this was due to an inability to speak English, but was also due to the fact that their previous work and education experience was not as valued in Canadian society as it had been in their countries of origin (p. 254-255). In conjunction with other factors, the inability to find work relevant to their social and educational backgrounds led many parents to feel depressed and isolated from their host society.

Culture and Language Education

While this part of the chapter has so far looked at acculturation in general and as it relates to education, I have yet to draw a connection between acculturation and language education. Instead of explicitly discussing the role of acculturation in the language classroom, much of the literature focuses on the teaching and learning of culture in the language classroom (Morain, 1986; Paige et. al, 2000). There is an important distinction to be made between acculturation and culture learning. Culture learning is "the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture general knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures" (Paige et. al, 2000, p.4). Acculturation, as I have already discussed, refers to the process of change that occurs when cultures interact. Knowledge of a different culture may result in either a positive or negative response to that culture. Thus, culture learning in itself may not lead to more desirable acculturative outcomes (integration). That said, the way a culture is taught or learned may play a role in how language students perceive it, which would influence the way those students respond (i.e. acculturate to it).

In order to develop my understanding of the role of language learning in the process of acculturation, I approached the literature with two questions:

(1) Can language programs effectively teach culture to their students?

(2) What is the response of language learners to the second/foreign language culture as a result of the culture teaching in the language classroom?

While attempts have been made at integrating culture into the language classroom since the 1980s, there has been little empirical research that evaluates the effectiveness of these techniques (Boutin, 1993; Chaudron, 1986; Paige et. al, 2000). The scholarship on the subject is largely theoretical or is based on secondary findings and there remains much disagreement on the matter. Of the criticisms of classroom-based culture learning, some argue that classrooms are rigidly controlled by the teacher (who limits the type of discourse occurring and determines which students speak and for how long); this artificial environment does little to teach students how to navigate real-world interactions (Ellis, 1992; Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). Krashen believes that the classroom can only teach rules, but is not conducive to the acquisition of culture (cited in Paige et. al, 2003, p.16).

Proponents of classroom-based culture learning claim the classroom environment affords benefits not obtainable in natural settings. Many argue that the classroom language environment is one where students can make mistakes without being subject to the criticism/embarrassment that might occur in a natural setting (Kramsch, 1993; Mitchell, 1998; Paige et. al, 2003). This affords them the opportunity to experiment without lasting repercussions and thus they are able to learn language and culture at their own pace. Van Lierr (1988) suggests that at the lower levels of proficiency students can learn as much in the classroom as those in natural environments as they lack the language skills to take advantage of natural communication. Freed

and Breen recognize that not all classrooms are equivalent and suggest that the learning that occurs is dependent upon factors such as type of instruction, the level of the class, and the individual differences between teacher and students (cited in Paige et. al, 2003, p.17) .

Regarding my second question, there also seems to be a lack of research on the role of cultural education in changing a student's affinity towards a culture (Paige et. al, 2003, p.19). Much of this research has focused on foreign language classrooms in the West that are relatively homogeneous, primarily catering to White, high achieving, college-bound students.

The refugee classroom, however, more closely resembles the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom, which "differs from the foreign language classroom not only in terms of student composition, but also with regard to motivation and perspective" (Paige et. al., 2000, p.19). While a foreign language teacher usually shares the same culture as her students, an ESL teacher tends to be of a different culture than her students. In this situation, the language classroom becomes a site of cultural interaction. Students may not feel as comfortable making mistakes as their teacher who is a representative of the dominant culture. Also, ESL students may be afraid of being assimilated into the dominant culture and respond negatively to teachers' attempts to promote it. Research done on ESL students in Sri Lanka by Canagarjah (1993) supports this, finding that students tended prefer rote memorization of grammar and vocabulary in response to the class's materials and instructor, which had an implicit Western bias. Canagarjah argues students' preferences for this type of learning allowed them to remain distant from the Western culture being forced upon them. Similar findings have been observed in ESL classrooms throughout the world (Bex, 1994; Paige et. al., 2000; Ryan, 1994).

Tied to this issue are notions of what constitutes good teaching and the language learning context. Several researchers have found ESL students often have a different idea of what

constitutes good teaching, usually derived from the types of education they received in their home countries, which differs significantly from the ideas of the ESL teacher (Paige et al., 2000). Also, cultural differences can often lead to miscommunication or a lack of communication about students' learning needs or teachers' pedagogical intent (Schalge & Soga, 2008; McGinnis, 1994).

Overall, the research connecting language education to acculturation is sparse. Many scholars examine the role that the teaching of culture may play in the classroom and in the language acquisition process, but here there is a lack of consensus. There does seem to be agreement, however, that most of the research in this area focuses on high socioeconomic status foreign language learners who represent a very different group than the refugee populations I am interested in.

Additional Theoretical Filters

Although the aim of my research is to understand the ways in which language education influences the process of refugee acculturation, there are additional conceptual lenses that may influence the ways in which I interpret and filter the ideas and experiences of the participants in this study. Here I discuss the roles of race and religion as factors that may influence the way refugees acculturate to Israeli society.

Race.

Although the idea of biological races has been discredited, race still plays a role in interactions throughout the world (American Association of Anthropology, 1998). Israelis come from a variety of backgrounds, including Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, and the Americas. People of African descent, however, have had more difficulty integrating into Israeli

society than other groups. In addition, many of the reasons opponents to African immigration are using to justify their positions have been criticized for their racist undertones (BBC News, 1999; Blum, 2009, Katz & Slavin, 2007; Tsurkov, 2010a; Tsurkov, 2010b; Tsurkov, 2010c; Friedman, 2010).

While race may play a role in the ways that Africans are viewed by Israeli society, it is less clear how Africans view themselves with respect to this social category. As Shepard (2008) points out, "African immigrants, in general, may find it difficult to grasp this notion of race as a social category since race is less salient to their identity than ethnic, national, or religious categories" (p.14). Adopting a racial identity may be particularly hard for adult refugees, who may have already developed well-formed social identities before leaving their countries of origin.

Religion.

Israel's Declaration of Establishment refers to the country as a "Jewish state" (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, 2004). While the document also guarantees freedom of religion and the equality of all faiths under the law, the notion of the Jewish state has a powerful influence culturally and politically (Lynfield, 2010). Religious difference has also played a role in depictions of the Israeli – Palestinian conflict, which contrast the predominantly Jewish Israelis against the predominantly Muslim Palestinian population (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, 2004).

Not only does religious identity have a prominent role in Israeli society, but there is evidence that an increase in religiosity is one way in which refugees cope with trauma and societal marginalization (Ai, Peterson & Huang, 2003; Shepard, 2008). In addition, in each of

the countries of origin described earlier, religion tends to play a much more prominent role in the lives of individuals than in most Western societies (The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2010).

Hypotheses

Based on the research cited, I had several hypotheses regarding the acculturation of African refugee language learners in Israel. With respect to Berry's model of acculturation, I expected that African refugees would either exhibit a pattern of marginalization or a pattern of separation. I believed one of these patterns would be followed as current events suggest that the increase the number of Africans coming to Israel has not been received well by Israeli society. I am not sure of whether African refugees will be able to maintain their culture in Israel or if that will show signs of eroding over time.

Regarding Ogbu's cultural model, I expected that participants would exhibit the characteristics of involuntary migrants. This expectation is based on the idea that asylum-seekers do not willingly leave their countries of origin, but instead are forced out. As involuntary migrants, the participants could have more negative views of Israelis and Israeli society and may not be as interested in pursuing formal education.

As language learning may influence the ability to engage and understand the host country culture, I expected that it may influence how refugees acculturate. I expected that higher language proficiency (as evidenced by better speaking, reading or writing abilities and by participation in more advanced language classes) would be related to better acculturation outcomes (such as more positive perceptions of Israelis and Israeli society and better

understanding of the culture). I also believed that language learning would have implications for both Berry's model and Ogbu's model. In terms of Berry's model, participants with better language skills would be more likely to exhibit the characteristics of individuals who have integrated or assimilated into the culture. Regarding Ogbu's model, participants more proficient in the language would exhibit characteristics more similar to voluntary learners.

Conclusion

This chapter examined some of the theories I thought would be relevant to the study I hope to conduct. Although I originally focused on theories of acculturation and the research surrounding acculturation, education and economic self-sufficiency, I found that I also needed to explore additional literature (pertaining to race and religion) to get a better understanding of some of the factors that may influence the refugee acculturation process. While I believe I was able to develop a better understanding of these key theories, I recognize there are avenues I did not pursue, but which may be influential.

Chapter 4

Towards Ethnography

The main purpose of this study is to understand how adult African refugee language learners are acculturating to life in Israel and examine the ways in which language classes affect this process of acculturation. This chapter describes the techniques I used to address this issue. I provide an overview of the methodology for this study, in the following sections, "Why Qualitative Research?" and "Reasons for Ethnography." The third section, "Country Background," discusses aspects of the history, culture and economy of Israel to provide the ethnographic context of this work. The fourth section, "Site and Participant Selection," describes both the setting and site of the research study, as well as the participant recruitment processes, selection criteria and sampling procedures. In the "Data Collection Sources and Procedures" section the variety of sources of data are discussed as well as the data collection procedures. The sixth section, "Human Subjects Protections" explains to precautions I took to ensure the confidentiality of my participants. The following section, "Data Analysis," details the procedures that were used to analyze the data collected during the study. The eighth section, "Validity/Transferability," discusses the techniques I used to increase the trustworthiness of my data.

Why Qualitative Research?

Qualitative researchers "are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). According to Creswell (2009), a researcher who employs qualitative methods makes several philosophical assumptions; the qualitative researcher:

1. Sees reality as subjective and multiple
2. Tries to lessen the distance between herself and that being researched
3. Acknowledges that research is value laden and biases are present
4. Uses the personal voice in his writing as well as qualitative terms and limited definitions
5. Uses inductive logic, studies the topic within its context, and uses an emerging design (p. 17).

These assumptions and practices are in line with my philosophical beliefs, making it difficult for me to select a quantitative methodology, which is objective and generalizable (Merriam, 2009; Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education, n.d.).

There were also several practical considerations that led me to a qualitative methodology. The concept of acculturation is somewhat ambiguous (and therefore very difficult to operationalize) and I have yet to encounter a quantitative measure I feel is an adequate measure of the concept. Even if I were to find a quantitative measure of acculturation that seemed appropriate, it would be very difficult to verify that the measure was valid for the population of interest. If I gave the measure to the students in English, for example, individuals with different first language backgrounds and cultures might interpret the measure's items in different ways; if I instead translated the measure into multiple languages, I would then need to validate the measure in each language before making any claims. I would also need to administer the measure at different sites and have a large and diverse enough sample before I was convinced my sample was truly representative of adult African refugee English language learners. I do not have access to many sites and am not sure I could recruit students in sufficient numbers to satisfy these sampling requirements.

Another factor that influenced my decision to use a qualitative methodology was the mission of the refugee advocacy organization that is granting me access to its education program; part of the organization's mission is to encourage refugee participation in projects and activities that promote a sense of investment and responsibility (African Refugee Development Center, 2011). In line with this principle, my research project requires significant involvement of the study's participants.

This study contains the primary elements of qualitative research described by several prominent qualitative researchers (Merriam, 2009; Berg, 2009; Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Merriam (2009) lists four 'key' characteristics of qualitative research. In any qualitative study, "the focus is on process, understanding, and meaning; the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis; the process is inductive; and the product is richly descriptive" (Merriam, 2009, pp. 14-17). The focus of this study, the role of English language education in the acculturation of adult African refugees in Israel, is explored through the perspectives of the English language learners themselves; it was their perspectives and experiences that informed this study. As the data that I analyzed in this study came from the informal conversations, interviews and document review I conducted, I was the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. The coding, categorization and connecting processes I employed to derive meaning from my data were highly inductive [I will not be testing preexisting hypotheses, but instead I will be building theory based upon my observations] (Trochim, 2006). Finally, the product of this research was richly descriptive, relying upon words as opposed to numbers to convey my findings.

Reasons for Ethnography

Although my study was qualitative, it does not fully adhere to any of the most common qualitative methodologies described by Creswell (2007): case study, ethnography, phenomenology, narrative or grounded theory. Creswell (2007) acknowledges these as "pure" approaches and admits that many researchers will combine elements of several of them in one study (p. 10). That said, he recommends that beginning qualitative researchers focus on only one of these methodologies. Following this advice, I attempted to apply the ethnography framework to my study. In the remainder of this section, I will discuss the main elements of ethnography and explain how these relate to my study.

Ethnography is a methodology employed when the researcher is interested in studying a cultural group. The ethnographer "describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture sharing group" (Creswell, 2007, p. 68). In order to understand a cultural group, the ethnographer must conduct fieldwork, immersing herself in that culture for an extended period of time (Fetterman, 2010, p. 33). The primary methods of collecting data while in the field are participant observation and interviews (Creswell, 2007; Fetterman, 2010, pp. 37-40).

The ethnographer must be able to capture the emic, or insider's, perspective of the culture group (Fetterman, 2010, p. 21). Without an emic perspective, an ethnographer could describe the behaviors and language of a cultural group, but he would not truly have an understanding of how the cultural group works. The ethnographer must also adopt an etic, or external, perspective that allows for an analysis of the cultural group in a more social scientific manner (Fetterman, 2010, p. 22). The integration of these two perspectives provides a holistic depiction of the cultural group.

The aim of data analysis in ethnography is to describe the cultural group and discover themes about the group (Creswell, 2007, p. 79). The techniques employed to accomplish this are varied and overlap with techniques used in other forms of qualitative research (Creswell, 2007; Fetterman, 2010; Merriam, 2009). Fetterman (2010) suggests ethnographic researchers:

1. Employ triangulation, the use of multiple data sources to justify a claim;
2. Search for patterns of thought and behavior within or between participants; and
3. Identify key or focal events that epitomize the cultural group (pp. 93-100).

Merriam (2009) divides ethnographic data analysis into three components: description, analysis and interpretation (p. 201). Description describes what is occurring, analysis identifies the essential features and the interrelationships among them, and interpretation attempts to give meaning to the data.

This study contains many of these elements. The cultural group I studied are adult African refugee language learners in Israel. The size of this cultural group is relatively small (with perhaps several hundred individuals currently in this group), but it is well-defined and there is a place (the education center) where members of this cultural group frequent. Admittedly, I remain unsure of the extent to which members of this group view themselves as distinct from other groups of African refugees, which causes me some concern. The phenomena I was particularly interested in was the acculturation of this group and the role language education plays in the process of acculturation, phenomena I could only understand by immersing myself into the culture of the group. I spent approximately nine months among this group, which I feel is an extensive period of time, and interacted with the culture group multiple times each week.

The data collection techniques I employed included participant observation and interviews, along with several other techniques (informal conversations and document review). The use of multiple types of data sources allowed me to triangulate my data. With respect to data analysis, I employed categorization and connection techniques recommended by Shepard (2008) that allowed me to describe, analyze and interpret my data in a manner similar to that described by Merriam (2009).

Country Background

Map of Israel.

(C.I.A., 2001)

Geography.

Israel has the distinction of being the only non-Arab country in the Middle East (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, 2009). It is a small country, having an area of approximately 22,000 km^2 (slightly smaller than the state of New Jersey) and a population of almost seven and a half million people (Ipl2, 2011; Israel, 2012). If you include the area of the West Bank, which is governed by the Palestinian Authority, the total area under Israeli control is almost 28,000 km^2. Israel borders the Mediterranean Sea to the west, Egypt to the southwest, Jordan to the east, Syria to the northeast and Lebanon to the north. Although the country is small, there is a lot of variation in climate depending on one's location. Tel Aviv and Haifa have a Mediterranean climate, with long, hot summers and cool, rainy winters. The Southern Negev and Arava regions have a desert climate (very few days of rain, hot summers and temperate winters). Beersheba and the Northern Negev regions are semi-arid, having cool winters and hot summers (but less rain than Tel Aviv and Haifa). In general, Israel has little rainfall during the summer months (May-September) and, as a result, has scarce water resources. While Israel employs techniques to mitigate the lack of water (such as deep irrigation), the country still suffers from drought. Desertification is also a major concern as is the lack of arable land.

Political System.

Israel is a parliamentary democracy, governed by the 120-member Knesset (Israel, 2012). Knesset membership is based upon proportional representation, a system in which a political party's proportion of representatives is determined by the proportion of votes that party receives in the national election. The country has universal suffrage at the age of 18 for citizens (both Jewish and Arab). Israel has a president, a largely ceremonial office, and a prime minister, who is a member of the majority party in the Knesset. Shimon Peres, the current president, and

Binyamin Netanyahu, the prime minister, are both members of the Kadima (Forward) party. Parliamentary elections are every four years, but interim elections can be held if a Knesset no-confidence vote forces the government to dissolve.

Currently there are 12 parties represented in the Knesset (Israel, 2012). Only five of these parties received more than 5% of the electoral vote and the two parties with the largest representation in the Knesset, Kadima and Likud-Ahi (a coalition of the Likud, or Consolidation, Party and the Ahi, my brother, Party) have roughly equal numbers of members (27 for Kadima, 26 for Likud-Ahi). Kadima is a centrist, liberal party while Likud is a conservative party that tends to support center-right or right wing policies. Likud's coalition partner, Ahi, is a right-wing religious party.

Israel has no Constitution, but some of the functions of a constitution are provided in the state's Declaration of Establishment, the basic Laws of the Knesset and the Israeli Citizenship Law (Israel, 2012). The country has a three-tiered judiciary (composed of magistrate courts, district courts and the Supreme Court), which is the only judiciary ranked "Free" by Freedom House according to its protection of political and civil rights (Freedom House, 2012).

Economy.

Israel is the most developed country in the region. It has a Human Development Index of 0.872, placing it into the category of very high human development countries (The World Bank, 2010). Israel has a technologically advanced free market economy. It is relatively resource poor and imports many resources, including crude oil, grains, raw materials (for manufacturing) and military equipment (Israel, 2012). Israel's leading exports include high-technology equipment, processed (cut) diamonds and agricultural products. Israel's per capita GDP is approximately 31,400 USD, which places it 42nd in the world. Of the country's GDP, 2.5% comes from

agriculture, 31.1% comes from industry, with the remainder coming from the service sector. Israel has a post-tax Gini coefficient of 0.371, suggesting a relatively high level of income inequality for Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries (Israel was admitted to the OECD in 2010) and placing it just above the United States (which has a Gini coefficient of 0.378) among OECD countries. Throughout the late summer and fall of 2011, there were several nationwide protests involving hundreds of thousands of Israelis; these were linked to the rising cost of living and increasing perceived increase in economic inequality.

Creation of the State.

Israel, which means "he who struggles/perseveres/contends with God" in Hebrew, inherits its name from the Biblical patriarch of the Jewish people (Biblical Baby Names, 2012). The region presently known as Israel has had many names throughout history, including Canaan, Kingdom of Jerusalem, Syria and Palestine. Israel is also referred to as the Holy Land due to its importance to members of the Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Although small Jewish communities had lived in the region for centuries, large-scale Jewish migration to Ottoman controlled Palestine did not begin until the late 19th century (Isseroff, 2009). Theodor Herzl is credited for creating Political Zionism, the political movement for the creation of Jewish state in the Land of Israel, in 1896 and the Second Aliya (1904-1914) saw 40,000 European Jews immigrate to the region, most of whom were fleeing persecution. Britain took control of the region after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I and by 1929, another 100,000 Jews had come to Palestine. A quarter of a million more Jews arrived during the following decade, at which point tensions were high. The Arab inhabitants resented the British occupation and the perceived favoritism showed by the British to the region's Jewish inhabitants. The Arab revolt of 1936-1939 put pressure on Britain to face the

issue and restrictions were placed on Jewish immigration. There was a backlash against this, however, and clandestine operations were organized to continue to bring Jews to the region. By the end of World War II, one-third of the population of Palestine was Jewish.

Britain's policies put it at odds with both the Jewish and Arab populations of Palestine and, unable to find a solution acceptable to both sides, it relinquished authority of the region in 1947 (Isseroff, 2009). The UN then took up the issue, advocating in September of 1947 that the region be divided into two autonomous, but economically integrated, states. The Arabs rejected this proposal and, when the issue remained unresolved three months later, a three-day strike began in protest. Fighting between Arabs and Jews broke out immediately, as well, and this led to civil war. In the ensuing violence 250,000 Palestinians either fled or were expelled and on May 14, 1948, the Jewish Agency (the representative organization of the Jews in Palestine) proclaimed an independent Jewish state in the region. Upon the declaration of independence several Arab armies (Egypt, Syria, Transjordan [now known as Jordan] and Iraq) entered the fray, but were repelled by Israeli forces (Israel, 2012).

The aftermath of the war left over 700,000 Palestinians displaced and ties between Israel and its neighbors shaky. Israel has fought seven wars with its neighbors, primarily over the demarcation of national borders and the issue of the Palestinian Territories (Background Note: Israel, 2010). The Palestinian Territories, which consist of the West Bank and Gaza, are regions currently controlled by Israel and are home to the majority of the Palestinians (and their descendants) displaced in the 1948 War. The Israel-Palestine conflict has garnered Israel a lot of negative attention; Human Rights Watch (2010) has accused the country of committing human rights abuses on several occasions. Israel's relationship with countries in the Muslim and Arab

Worlds has also been negatively affected by Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. Currently Israel has full diplomatic ties with only two of its neighbors, Egypt and Jordan (Israel, 2010).

Demographics.

Israel is a diverse country, with a population drawn from 100 countries (Background Note: Israel, 2010). Israel's population is approximately 7.5 million, just over 500,000 of whom live in the territories of the West Bank, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem (Israel, 2012). Most Israelis are Jewish (76.4%) with non-Jewish Arabs being the overwhelming majority of the rest of the population. The Jews who live in Israel fall into one of three categories: Askenazim, Jews who trace their ancestry to Western, Central or Eastern Europe; Sephardim, Jews who trace their ancestry to Spain, Portugal or southern Europe; and Mizrahi Jews, who trace their ancestry to Asia or North Africa. Of the remainder of the population, 68% are Muslims, 9% are Christians, and 7% are Druze, an ethnic and religious minority that occupies much of the Levant.

In 1950 Israel passed legislation for Jewish Right of Return, allowing members of the Jewish diaspora to immigrate and obtain Israeli citizenship (Bloom, 2009). This policy was expanded to allow those of Jewish ancestry (having a Jewish parent or grandparent), their spouses or converts to Judaism to immigrate in 1970. During the last three decades, Israel has absorbed over 100,000 Ethiopians and more than 1,000,000 Russians under the Right of Return policy. As Israel encourages Jewish immigration, a large percentage of Israelis are foreign-born. Twenty two percent of Israelis were born in Europe or the Americas, while 10% come from Asia or Africa. Although those of Jewish descent may immigrate to Israel, currently those of Palestinian descent who fled Israel (and their descendants) have no legal right to return to Israel.

Since 2000, large numbers of migrant workers have settled in Israel (Israel, 2012). Many of these workers have overstayed their work visas, but have continued to remain in the country.

There are no official figures for how many migrant workers reside in Israel, but Kemp (2004) estimates that there are over 200,000 migrant workers currently in the country. Some of the largest numbers of migrants come from Ghana, the Philippines, China, Romania, Thailand and India (IRIN, 2009).

Languages.

Hebrew and Arabic are the official languages of the country (with Hebrew much more widely used and spoken by the non-Arab Israelis), though the Israeli courts have ruled that Hebrew is the more important of the two (Lewis, 2009). English is the most widely used foreign language and is widely used throughout the country. It had an official status (along with Hebrew and Arabic) when Palestine was under British mandate, but this was revoked in 1948. Most government signs (such as street signs and highway signs) are written in Hebrew, English and Arabic, but English and Arabic are not used in a consistent manner. Some government signs use local Arabic and conventional English; others use English and Arabic transliterations of Hebrew, instead of actual Arabic or English words.

Several other languages are used among the ethnic minority populations in Israel. Russian and Amharic are widely spoken within the Russian and Ethiopian communities and 700,000 Israelis of either North African or French descent use French (Lewis, 2009). Many of the migrant workers also use their native languages in their communities.

Religion.

While Israel is often referred to as a Jewish state, the freedom of religion has been protected by both the Knesset and the courts (Israel, 2012). The state officially recognizes five religions, all of which belong to the Abrahamic tradition: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Druzeism

and Bahai Faith; those not belonging to one of the recognized faiths are free to practice their beliefs. Israel is said to operate under a secular-religious status quo that has largely been in place since the founding of the state. Under this policy, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel has authority over many personal status issues (such as marriage, Jewish burial, divorce) for Jews, while members of other religious communities must go through their religious authorities. One ramification of this policy is that it is impossible for one to marry outside of one's religious community in Israel, as there is no secular marriage. The status quo also mandates that public transport during the Sabbath be suspended and that the importation of non-Kosher foods be prohibited (the Supreme Court has defended the right to sell non-Kosher products, such as pork, however). There are secular and various religious school networks in Israel, all of which are overseen by the Ministry of Education. While the status quo has been in place for decades, there has been pressure to stop some policies from groups arguing for a greater separation between religion and the state.

Although the majority of Israelis identify as Jewish, there is wide variation in the level of religiosity of Jewish Israelis. While it is very difficult to define what it means to be religious, the Jewish Center for Public Affairs identifies four major categories based upon research conducted by the Guttman Institute of Applied Social Research: ultra-Orthodox (Haredi), religious Zionists, traditional Jews, and secular Jews (Elazar, n.d.). The ultra-Orthodox, which make up 8% of the population, are the most religiously conservative of Israelis and have adopted specific forms of dress. Religious Zionists make up 17% of the population; they adopt modern conventions, but are strict in their observance of the Sabbath. Traditional Jews differ from religious Zionist in that they tend to be more liberal in their religious practices. For example, they may use electricity or operate vehicles on the Sabbath, which the ultra-Orthodox and religious Zionists

would not do. Approximately 55% of Israelis fit into this group, the majority of whom are of North African or Middle Eastern origin. About 20% of Israelis are secular, meaning that they attach no religious significance to Jewish practices, though they may still observe some of most of them for cultural reasons; many of these Jews identify as Ashkenazi.

Site and Participant Selection

Setting.

This study takes place in Tel Aviv, Israel. Tel Aviv is the second most populous city in Israel with a population of almost 400,000 (The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 2010). Tel Aviv was founded in 1909 on the outskirts of Jaffa (also Yafo, Jaffo), an Arab port city (Lonely Planet, 2011). The city was originally founded by Jewish settlers looking to found a Jewish city away from what they saw as the cramped, unsanitary, and primarily Arab Jaffa. The settlement was modeled in the style of the English 'garden city' and continued to develop until the Ottomans expelled the Jews from the area in 1914. After World War I, the British took control of the area, and Jews continued to migrate there from Jaffa until the State of Israel declared independence in 1948 (Falk, n.d.). For a short time Tel Aviv was the capital of Israel, before the capital was moved to Jerusalem in 1949.

Tel Aviv began a process of revitalization in the 1960s, demolishing older buildings and constructing modern ones (Lonely Planet, 2011). The process was less successful than hoped and the city went into a period of decline up through the 1980s. Around this time, the process of gentrification began in some of the poorer areas of the city and large numbers of migrants from the Soviet Union began taking up residence in the city (Levy, 2009).

Although no longer the political capital of Israel, the Tel Aviv of today is the business and cultural capital of the country. Tel Aviv has a stock exchange and a diamond exchange, as

well as several prominent museums and a world-class opera and theater (The American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 2010). The city is also Israel's research and technology center and employs a greater proportion of Israelis than any other city (Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality, 2011). It is the most expensive city in Israel and the Middle East (American Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 2010; Easy Expat, 2008).

Tel Aviv is a relatively secular city, though over 91% of its residents have a Jewish background; about half of the city's remaining residents are of Muslim or Christian Arab decent (Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality, 2011). The city has a much higher percentage of single men (40.8%), single women (34.6%) and single-parent households (21.4% of all households with children) than the rest of Israel (Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality, 2011). It also has a much older population than Israel as a whole, with an average age of 34.2 and a high proportion of senior citizens (14.1% of the city's population).

Although relatively prosperous, Tel Aviv was traditionally divided along ethnic lines, with Jews of European descent living in certain areas and those of Middle Eastern or Iberian descent living in others (The Economist, 2007). This has changed in recent times with the gentrification of many of the poorer parts of the city. Most African refugees live in close proximity to Tel Aviv's central bus station, in a run-down area in south Tel Aviv known as Neve Sha'anan (Shilo, 2007).

Site.

The site I conducted my fieldwork at is an education center run by the African Refugee Development Center (ARDC) in Tel Aviv. The center is relatively young; it began offering services in January of 2009 (African Refugee Development Center, 2011). It runs several programs for African refugees, including a Vocational Training program in collaboration with a

local technical college, an assistance center for refugees hoping to gain admission to and funding for higher education in Israel, and a literacy development program for children waiting for permission to enter Israel's public school system.

The adult language education program run by the center offers classes in both Hebrew and English (African Refugee Development Center, 2011). The number of students served by the program each year is about 600. Roughly 70% of the students served by the center are enrolled in one of the English classes, with the remainder taking one of the Hebrew classes. The English classes are divided into five proficiency levels, the most basic level designed for students with no experience with English. The Hebrew classes are divided into three proficiency levels, with the lowest level for students unable to read or write Hebrew (this does not mean they cannot speak Hebrew, however). The proficiency levels are particular to the language program and do not reflect a universal standard. Although a placement exam is used to place students in classes above the lowest level, grading of the exam is not standardized (there is no formal grading rubric; many of the items are free response and open to interpretation; and some students are timed while others are not) and placement is dependent upon other factors (such as how full a class is and the availability of the student). The result of these factors is that there is a very wide spectrum of proficiency levels at each class level.

Classes are taught by volunteer teachers who attend a three-hour training session before being allowed to teach. Some of the teachers are teachers by profession, while others have no background or experience teaching. When possible, less experienced teachers are paired with more experienced ones in the classroom, the intention being that the less experienced teachers can learn from watching their more experienced counterpart and receive feedback on their practice.

There is no formal curriculum for the language program. Teachers are provided with a variety of resources (including books, teaching aids and language games) and are also encouraged to bring in their own materials. As classes tend to consist of students of varying levels of language proficiency, it has been very difficult for the program to create a curriculum that would be appropriate over the long term.

Teaching quality is highly variable, which in part stems from the variability in the age and level of professional experience of the teachers. While some teachers are very professional (planning lessons in advance, giving assessments, being on-time, etc.), others are much more lax (cancelling classes at the last minute, coming to class unprepared, etc.). The lack of a formal curriculum allows teachers to tailor their teaching to meet the needs of their students, but also means that those who are less experienced may have difficulties preparing activities for their students that are appropriate. So far, the language program does not have a system in place to remove poor teachers nor recognize high quality teachers.

Each class contains between 5-20 students, depending on the level of the class, and meets two evenings a week for two hours; these classes last for approximately 10 weeks (45 hours total). The ethnic breakdown of students in the English language program isn't known, but classes primarily consist of Sudanese students, with a small minority of students coming from other African countries. In the Hebrew language classes there are about equal numbers of Sudanese and Eritrean students, who make up about 90% of the students taking Hebrew classes. The percentage of women and men learning English at the center are 3% and 97%, respectively (A. Stringer, personal communication, February 24, 2011). Part, but not all, of the gender differential can be explained by the fact that the majority of African refugees in Israel are males.

Program administrators have been attempting to increase the female representation, but so far have been unsuccessful.

My primary reason for choosing this site is that the education center is explicit about its objective to foster the integration of African refugees into local communities. I also chose this center because its parent organization (ARDC) is very well-known and respected for the work it has done in the area of refugee advocacy and education. I have serious concerns about programs run by other organizations I encountered that were less structured and formalized; given that I knew it would be over a year between making contact with a school and actually beginning data collection, I wanted to affiliate with an organization with a history of consistency.

Another reason why this site was appropriate was the size of its program. It caters to students from a several African nations; other programs I encountered only catered to one nationality. Also, the size of the program allows for the segregation of students into five different proficiency levels (African Refugee Development Center, 2011). This helps to mitigate the complications associated with multilevel classrooms, classrooms that contain students of widely varying proficiency levels (Texas Education Agency, 2010). This site was also appealing because of the warm reception I received from its staff to participate in and support my research. While I was able to make contact with other refugee education programs, none was as receptive to my research aims.

Participants and Sampling method.

The research participants were selected from among the 150 students and teachers at the education center. I used a non-probabilistic form of sampling referred to as criterion-based selection (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). Non-probabilistic sampling methods are used when "the fieldworker expects mainly to use his data not to answer questions like 'how much' and 'how

often' but to solve qualitative problems, such as discovering what occurs, the implication of what occurs, and the relationships linking occurrences" (Honigmann, 1982, p. 84). As my study is qualitative in nature, aimed at discovering the type of acculturation that is occurring for a population of African refugee Hebrew and English language learners, non-probabilistic methods were most appropriate.

Criterion-based selection involves the selection of a set of attributes essential to one's study, which are used in the selection of participants. According to Maxwell (2005), a researcher would use criterion-based selection when, "achieving representativeness or typicality of the settings, individuals, or activities selected" (p. 89). For this study, the main reason for using criterion-based sampling was to reflect certain demographic characteristics of the student population. This was important because these demographic differences may have played a role in how student-participants perceived and were perceived by the host society; this, in turn, may have influenced the process of acculturation. The four rules I employed were:

1. Choose students who are regular attendees of the language classes in which they have registered.
2. Choose students from varying proficiency levels.
3. Choose at least two women and six men.
4. Choose students from at least three different nationalities/ethnicities to reflect the ethnic diversity of the school.

There are two criteria I used to select the teacher participants:

1. The teacher must be teaching at least one of the student-participants.
2. The teachers must be willing to allow me to observe their classes on a regular basis.

These criteria were important for my study because they allowed for the triangulation of my data; by interviewing only those teachers who worked with at least one of my student-participants and who allowed me to observe their classes, I was able to observe some of my student participants and obtain feedback from their teachers about the ways students were acculturating in class.

My sample size was restricted to eight student participants and two teacher-participants. This stemmed from my concern that the study would become too overwhelming if it were allowed to expand beyond this size. I was more interested in collecting multiple sources of data from each of my participants than having a large sample. This is in line with Maxwell's (2007) recommendation that qualitative researchers select "not only to study a few sites or individuals but also to collect extensive detail about each site or individual studied" (p. 126).

Participant recruitment.

After obtaining University of Maryland IRB approval and heading to Israel for data collection, I worked with the ARDC's program manager to recruit both students and teachers to participate in this study.

Data Collection Sources and Procedures

This study utilized five different sources of data, which included:

1. Informal discussions with student-participants
2. Individual interviews with each student participant
3. Individual interviews with each teacher-participant
4. Participant observation
5. Document review

Informal Discussion.

I had several informal discussions with each of the participants at the beginning of the study. There were several reasons for having these discussions. First, I used them to gauge interest in participating in this study and they were an opportunity to acquaint the participants with the study and allow them to ask any questions they may have. Also, I tried to start a discussion about my student-participants' experiences and feelings about attending a language program in Tel Aviv as well as about their educational experiences before coming to Israel. I used some of the information I gleaned from these discussions to generate specific questions I asked my student-participants during their individual interviews.

Student interviews.

I conducted semi-structured interviews with each student–participant. Most interviews took between 45 minutes to 1.5 hours. The interviews were all conducted throughout the duration of the language class. I recorded all interviews with a digital recorder and afterwards I transcribed them. I also took hand-written notes of the interviews as a backup in case the recordings were lost or corrupted, but also to write down initial thoughts or impressions. Each of the interviews was conducted either in an unoccupied room at the education center, at a participant's home, or at my home, depending on the preference of the participant. Given the English proficiencies of most of my participants, all but two of my interviews were conducted in English. For the two of my participants who did not feel comfortable interacting in English, Ibrahim and Rafik, I worked with volunteer-translators during my interviews. For Ibrahim, who speaks French fluently, we interacted through a French-English translator. Rafik preferred using Arabic during our interviews, so we communicated through an Arabic-English translator.

I conducted three interviews with each of the student-participants. The first interview focused on background information (including date of birth, how many family members they have and live with, languages spoken at home/with peers, etc.) and the participant's feelings about immigrating to Israel. I also used these data to formulate questions for subsequent interviews.

The second interview focused on the interactions the student-participants have with Israelis as well as on the skills they feel are needed to obtain better employment. In addition to unanswered questions I formulated from the personal discussions and first interview, I will be used several questions adapted from the Longitudinal Immigration Student Adaptation (LISA) study (NYU Steinhardt, 2001). The LISA study, a series of interviews originally designed to be administered over several years, elicits "data on demographic characteristics, immigration histories, changing family systems, networks of social relations and supports, school and neighborhood contexts, and patterns of academic engagement and disengagement over time" (NYU Steinhardt, 2001). Although not administered as originally intended, the study provides a number of questions pertaining to the types of social and cultural changes one might experience in the process of acculturating to a different culture.

The last interview focused on discussing student perceptions of the role of their classes in helping them to understand, navigate and participate in the host country culture. This interview was the least structured of the set and occurred near the end of the class so as to provide the greatest opportunity for students to be exposed to the language class. Figure 2 depicts the mapping of student and teacher interviews onto the seven research sub-questions listed in chapter one. This figure is in appendix A along with the three student-participant interview protocols.

Teacher interviews.

I also had two open-ended interviews with the teacher-participants in the study. These interviews lasted approximately half an hour and took place in either an unoccupied room at the education center or in another location preferable to the teacher. Both interviews occurred during the course of the class the teacher was teaching. The first interview focused on the teacher's perceptions of their students and how they relate to/respond to the host country culture. The second interview focused on the sorts of activities the teacher had been using in an effort to acquaint their students with the host country culture. The two teacher-participant interview protocols are in appendix B. It is important to note that the teachers played a secondary role in my research. Although I interviewed them their voices are not explicit in the participant profiles. Instead, I used their interviews to supplement the student interviews (to verify what the student-participants were telling me; to get a better understanding of the language program and classroom environment; and to get a better understanding of how my student-participants were viewed by others) and to help paint a more detailed picture of the research site (much of this influenced my writing of the section entitled Site above).

Participant observation.

I volunteered as a tutor at the education center for several months in advance of the primary data collection event (the beginning of a new round of classes at the education center). This helped me gain an understanding of the culture and functioning of the English language program as well as familiarize the students with my presence. During the 10-week class, I observed one of the classes of each of my teacher-participants. During my time at the center, I kept notes and wrote reflective memos of interesting observations of and interactions with

members of the community. When observing classes, I kept field notes containing descriptions of any occurrences and my personal responses to what I observed.

Document review.

I examined documents associated with the student-participants. This included any grades and attendance records that were available at the education center, where they existed. I also had conversations with the student participants' teachers about each participant's work and in class performance.

Denial of entry to Israel.

While I was in the process of collecting data for my dissertation I participated in an international conference outside of Israel; upon my return to the country, I was denied entry and sent back to the United States. The reason for being denied entry had to do with my official status in the country; I had been living in Israel on a tourist visa while volunteering for the ARDC and doing research. As I was not a tourist, I should not have been in Israel.

Using a tourist visa had been the advised course of action (by the ARDC as well as the Israeli Embassy in Washington DC) when preparing to go to Israel as it would not have been possible for someone in my situation to obtain a different visa from the US. Once in Israel, I was told that my organization was ineligible to receive international volunteers and that I would need to remain on the tourist visa.

In the end, my early departure from Israel had ramifications for my research. First, I was not able to conduct a photo-voice activity with the participants that I had originally planned to do (only one participant had completed it before I left for the conference). Also, I was only able to finish interviews with eight student participants and two teacher participants. Originally, I had

planned on interviewing between eight and ten student participants and between two and four teacher participants. Although I only included eight student profiles, there were a few partially completed sets of interviews with two other students that I did not include, but which influenced my thinking. Finally, I expected to have my participants conduct member checks of my interviews, but lost my ability to contact most of them once I returned to the US.

While the official reason for my being sent back to the United States was my lack of appropriate visa, I believe that there may have been additional reasons for my expulsion related to the socially and politically tense issue of Africans in Israel. Around the time I was denied entry, several events occurred that made the issue of refugees even more volatile. In May, two rape accusations were made against African men in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Shortly after, this sparked a series of anti-African riots in which African-run stores were vandalized, African pedestrians attacked and some apartments firebombed (Greenwood, 2012; JTA, 2012). The anti-African riots drew international condemnation, as did the behavior of several Israeli politicians, one of whom referred to the Africans as a "cancer in our society" (Greenwood, 2012). Since these events, Israel has ramped up its efforts to expel many of the Africans. The Supreme Court has allowed the government to deport the South Sudanese, many of which have either been detained or expelled (Gottlieb, 2012). As these actions had popular support, many politicians have promised more sweeping action to get rid of the Africans. As a result of the South Sudanese deportation, many in the African asylum-seeker community worry they will be next. As a result of being denied entry to Israel, I lost contact with many of my participants. I was able to make contact with a few, all of whom said they were frightened by what was occurring. Some are afraid to walk the streets and go out only when it is necessary (to go to work, shopping

or class). They have also become more earnest in seeking ways to leave Israel, though this has not yielded many positive results.

Human Subjects Protections

Risks and benefits.

In all endeavors there are risks. Participants in my study may have been uncomfortable discussing painful experiences or their feelings. Although precautions were taken to ensure confidentiality, if information from interviews did become public in the future, there is a chance this information could offend someone in the school community or home, a situation that could bring negative (social) repercussions upon a participant(s). That said, there are several reasons to believe these risks are minimal. The education center where data collection occurred is very supportive of this research, as were the students and teachers. Also, the topic under discussion is culturally benign. All of my interviews were conducted in a private environment and are confidential; therefore, it is unlikely that anything said during participant interviews might become public.

The potential benefit for participants is that speaking about their experiences, perspectives, hopes and frustrations may be cathartic and enjoyable. Especially for those who feel marginalized, the opportunity to have their voices heard by an outsider may be highly desirable. Also, my hope is that this work will be used to help improve education provision at the education center as well as at similar centers throughout Israel; many of the classroom participants and teachers may benefit from these changes if the education center is responsive.

Informed consent.

Verbal informed consent was used during this study to reduce the chances of there being a record of a participant's participation. I explained the content of the consent form to ensure that participants had an understanding of the risks, benefits and human protections associated with the study. Participants were allowed to ask questions, and I provided any clarifications that were necessary. They were told that they could discontinue participation at any time and could receive a copy of the consent form for their records.

Confidentiality.

Every interview was conducted in private and no one (apart from the interviewee and myself) has had access to our discussions. As discussed in the storage and destruction of data section below, all data is stored in a secure location and pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of my participants.

Storage and destruction of data.

All electronic data associated with this research project was stored on a separate hard drive and locked in a cabinet when not in use. All handwritten or printed data related to this project was stored in the same cabinet when not in use. In addition, participant's names were never associated with their data (each was assigned a pseudonym, the key for which will be located in a separate locked drawer in the researcher's home). I am the only individual with access to these data. Any findings stemming from my research are stored on a password protected laptop. Data will be retained for three years after the research project is completed, as specified by IRB; afterwards, all electronic data will be deleted from the hard drive and all paper documents shredded.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis can be daunting as there are a multitude of techniques that can be used to analyze data (Maxwell, 2005; Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). Data analysis methods are highly flexible because qualitative studies "by their very nature, are emergent in design and inductive in analysis" (Merriam, 2009, p. 163). Creswell (2007) suggests that any effective qualitative data analysis procedure have three components (p. 148). First, the procedure should be able to prepare and organize the large quantities of data produced during the process of data collection (Creswell, 2007, p. 148). There should also be a procedure in place for reducing the data into more manageable themes or categories. Finally, any effective procedure must have a way of representing the data.

Given the large quantities of data encountered in a qualitative study, the researcher cannot wait until data collection is complete before beginning to analyze the data (Merriam, 2009, p. 170). Thus, unlike quantitative data analysis, qualitative data analysis often is conducted in concert with the data collection process. There are multiple meanings one can extract from a unit of data, yet there is no guaranteed method for understanding or drawing connections between units of data. Acknowledging this dilemma, Schatzman and Strauss (1973) depict what they call the 'model researcher':

> Our model researcher starts analyzing very early in the research process. For him, the option represents an analytic strategy: he needs to analyze as he goes along both to adjust his observation strategies, shifting some emphasis towards those experiences which bear upon the development of his understanding, and generally, to exercise control over his emerging ideas by virtually simultaneous checking or testing of these ideas (pp. 108-109).

In effect, data analysis in qualitative research should be an iterative and continual process (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Merriam, 2009). According to Maxwell (2005), "the experienced qualitative researcher begins data analysis immediately after finishing the first interview or observation, and continues to analyze the data as long as he or she is working on the research, stopping briefly to write reports and papers" (p. 95).

For my study, I used the combination of categorizing and connecting strategies suggested by Maxwell (2005, pp. 95-99) and employed by Shepard (2008). Categorizing strategies serve to "fracture" the data, reorganizing it into categories that facilitate comparisons between similar units and aid in theory development (Maxwell, 2005, p. 96). The primary tool of categorization is coding, the process of assigning descriptive codes to the words and behaviors in the data. Connecting strategies attempt to "understand the data in context, using various methods to identify the relationships between the different elements in the text" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 98). A researcher employing these strategies looks for relationships within a context between statements and events that lead to a coherent, whole picture of a phenomenon. While categorizing strategies can help one discover differences and similarities across individuals, connecting strategies can assist in understanding the way events in a specific context are connected. As Maxwell (2005) sees it, categorizing and connecting strategies are complementary and one cannot obtain a "well-rounded" understanding of a phenomenon without employing them both (p. 99).

Analysis methods.

During each discussion, interview and observation, I took short notes on any interesting comments or events, supplementing these with any impressions, questions or ideas that occurred to me. Following this, I expanded these notes into more extensive field notes, a highly descriptive set of "verbal descriptions of the setting, the people, the activities; direct quotations

or at least the substance of what people said; [and] observer's comments" of each interview (Merriam, 2009, pp. 130-131). I also wrote field notes while conducting document review.

In addition to taking field notes on the interviews and discussions, I personally transcribed all interviews shortly after conducting them. The field notes and transcriptions were coded using a procedure known as open coding. In open coding, meanings and themes are allowed to emerge organically, without restrictions placed upon them (Changing Minds, 2011). Higher order elements called categories, conceptual units that cover multiple pieces of data, begin to arise from this process as the researcher begins to see recurring codes or patterns as he explores more of the data (Merriam, 2009, pp. 178-181). I employed the constant comparative method, whereby each new piece of data is compared to codes and notes that were already identified, in order to aid category formulation (Creswell, 2007, p. 64). Throughout this process I also used analytic memos to help me generate and refine my categories. An analytic memo consists of "questions, musings and speculations about the data and emerging theory" (Creswell, 2007, p. 290).

The data coding process continued until saturation, the state in which no new codes or categories are being identified from the data, is achieved (Creswell, 2007, p. 160). According to Merriam (2009) there are several criteria that should be met before category specification is complete. Categories should:

(1) Be responsive to the research purpose

(2) Be exhaustive

(3) Be mutually exclusive

(4) Be very sensitive to what is in the data

(5) Be conceptually congruent (Merriam, 2009, pp. 185-187).

Using these techniques, I tried to unpack "the social organization of verbal and non-verbal behavior as it occurs simultaneously and during interaction" (Rubio & Szecsy, 1997). I found that this process resulted in several high-level categories that held both within and between participants (Shepard, 2008).

Validity/Transferability

Validity is a controversial topic in qualitative research, with some arguing the term is appropriate only for quantitative methodologies and others subdividing the concept into additional components (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Berg, 2009). I favor Maxwell's (2005) definition, "the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account" (p. 106). Even though my research isn't quantitative, the conclusions I draw should follow logically from my observations and should seem reasonable to others who did not conduct the study. Creswell (2007) suggests that any qualitative study employ at least two recognized sources of validity (p. 209). Many qualitative researchers have begun using the term 'transferability' to refer to the qualitative analogue of validity (Trochim, 2006b).

Of the possible sources of validity, the type that is most convincing to me is triangulation. This can be accomplished through "comparing and cross-checking data collected through observations at different times or in different places, or interview data collected from people with different perspectives or from follow-up interviews with the same people" (Merriam, 2009, p. 216). In this study, I obtained data not only from multiple participants (the eight students and two teachers), but I also used multiple forms of data (interviews, observations and document review). The information I obtained from these different sources pointed to a similar set of conclusions.

Prolonged engagement in the field is another source of validity (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). Prolonged engagement, defined by Creswell (2007) as "working with people day in and day out, for long periods of time," enhances the credibility of a researcher's findings as it reduces the likelihood of the researcher making spurious generalizations or formulating premature theories (p. 208). I spent approximately 10 months volunteering with the education program, arriving several months before data collection began. I believe that my longer term presence not only gave me more credibility with members of the education program's community, but allowed me more time to explore and refine my ideas.

Summary

Through the use of ethnography, the purpose of this study is to determine in what ways language classes can influence the acculturation of adult African refugees in Tel Aviv. The methods I used for this study are detailed in this chapter and the procedures for maintaining quality research and analysis are provided. Stake's (1995) affirmation that, "the function of research is not necessarily to map and conquer the world but to sophisticate the beholding of it" is the goal of my dissertation, so that we can better understand the situation of African refugees trying to acclimate to their new lives in Israel (p. 43).

Chapter 5

Structure of the Findings

This chapter explains the organization of the following three chapters, which present my findings in the form of student profiles. Each of these chapters deals with a specific region of Africa: Darfur/Sudan, Horn of Africa, and West Africa. These regions contain the countries of origin of my participants. Individual chapters are composed of country histories and participant profiles. Descriptions of the country histories and the participant profiles are presented in the sections below.

Country Histories

For each participant I wrote a short history of his or her country of origin. Each country history precedes the profile of the participant (or participants, in the case of Darfur) from that country. The histories provide the context for understanding the factors that would lead someone to flee; help explain some of the religious, cultural, political or ethnic distinctions relevant in that country; and offer background information that may help in the interpretation of statements in the participant profiles.

Participant Profiles

The participant profiles are distilled from the interviews I conducted with the students and are supplemented by my observations of them, my discussions with their teachers and what I've seen of their coursework. The purpose of the participant profiles is to provide an insight into how these students perceive both their lives in Israel and the challenges they face living in a new culture.

As I reviewed and began coding my data, several themes arose that seemed most critical for understanding the participants' experiences. While not every theme was relevant for every participant, these themes were useful in providing an organizational structure to the student profiles. It should be noted that a different researcher might have distilled different themes from these data and that my subjective interpretation is just one way of making sense of it.

Although the participant profiles have a similar structure, it will become apparent that there is no such thing as the 'typical' African language student. While some participants may share a similar cultural or religious background, each has a different history and a different perspective of life in Israel. Below I list and try to explain each of the themes I have used in the organization of the profiles. It should be noted that these themes are often not independent. In such cases, I made a decision on where (under which theme) to place a given piece of information based on what I thought made the most sense for a given participant.

Reasons for Going to Israel

This theme is a discussion of the reasons why the participants decided to leave their countries of origin. As many of the participants did not come directly to Israel, there is often a discussion of their experiences in other African countries. There is also a discussion of what factors led them to Israel as opposed to any other country. For some participants who did not find what they expected in Israel, I included information on their thoughts about staying or leaving Israel.

Language

This theme includes a discussion of the languages a participant speaks and the context in which each of these languages is spoken. It also includes a discussion of the courses the

participants are taking and their perceptions of these classes. Under this theme are the reasons participants cite for taking their classes, as any goals they have for achieving proficiency, and the contexts in which they hope to use their language in the future.

Education

This theme includes information about the educational background of the participants. It also contains information about any educational programs participants are currently enrolled in as well as their plans for continuing their education in the future. As obtaining education was a strong motivator for most of the participants, many of the profiles discuss the importance of education and perceived opportunities (or lack thereof) for educational progress in Israel.

Work

This theme discusses participants' perspectives of working in Israel as well as their professional aspirations. It discusses any obstacles participants may face either at work or in finding work. For those participants who had professions before leaving their countries of origin, there is a discussion of their professional backgrounds. For those who did not have a profession before coming to Israel, there is a discussion of their future work aspirations.

Culture

Here is a discussion of participants' knowledge about and perspectives of Israeli or Western culture. Included here is a discussion of participants' social connections with Israelis (friendships, organization memberships, etc). For some participants, this discussion also brought in their perspectives of their home country cultures and religions. Also, under this theme are participants' beliefs about how Africans are seen by Israelis.

The State

Many participants made a distinction between Israelis and the government of Israel. This theme discusses participants' beliefs about the Israeli government and the benefits or obstacles presented by it. Included here are discussions of the conditional visa that all of the participants have been issued and their feelings about it. Also included here are discussions of human rights and the role the state or society is playing in providing or ignoring them.

Reflection

At the end of each profile I included a reflection. This is not a theme gleaned from the data, but is something that has helped me to process and make sense of all of the data I have analyzed. It elaborates on some of my perceptions of the participants, makes explicit any biases that might be influencing how I responded to a participant and makes connections between the different themes.

Chapter 6

Darfur-Land of the Fur

This chapter deals with the experiences of participants from the Darfur region of Sudan. As Darfuris make up more than half of the students in the program, I wanted to include more than one participant from the region. The next section provides a history of Sudan including a discussion of the ethnic tensions in Darfur and the South. This is followed by profiles of each of the Darfuri students: Joe, Amina and Rafik.

Map of Sudan

(CIA, n.d.)

Republic of Sudan Country History

Sudan is a country that lies directly south of Egypt, and therefore is the closest to the land border between Africa and Israel. The country has a population of just over 42 million and, until the secession of Southern Sudan, was the largest country in terms of area in Africa and the Arab world (Sudan Country Profile, 2010).

For much of the 19th and 20th centuries, Sudan was ruled over by Egypt, which itself was subject to the British (Sudan Country Profile, 2010). Sudan gained its independence from the British in 1956 and within two years a military coup toppled the elected civilian government. Prior to independence, the north and south had been administered as two separate regions by the British, with Sudanese in the north restricted from traveling south (of the 10th parallel) and Sudanese from the south restricted from traveling north (of the 8th parallel). Ostensibly, this was to control the spread of malaria and other tropical diseases, which were severely affecting British troops, but the policy was also used as a mechanism to spread Christianity in the south while minimizing the influence of Islam from the north. In 1963, a civil war started between the north and south that lasted until 1972 (Sudan Timeline, 2010). The primary source of tension was the economic and political domination of the predominantly Muslim and Arab north over the predominantly Animist and Christian south.

In 1972, a peace accord was signed in Addis Ababa granting the south autonomy (Sudan Country Profile, 2010). Fighting broke out again in 1983 between government forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) The causes of this second civil war are tied to the discovery of oil in the south as well as the imposition of Sharia Islamic Law (Sudan, 2010). It is estimated that this war led to the deaths of more than two million people and the displacement of another four million. Peace talks resumed in earnest in 2002 and the final North/South

Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in January, 2005. The agreement granted the south autonomy for six years, after which time a referendum for independence would be held.

A different conflict broke out in the western Darfur region of Sudan in 2003 (Sudan, 2011; Sudan Timeline, 2010). Two rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) began attacking government installations in protest against the economic and political marginalization of the region. The government responded by directing attacks on the ethnic populations who were giving support to the rebel groups. In addition, the government armed and employed Arab nomadic tribes known as the janjaweed (Sudan, 2011; Sudan Country Profile, 2010). By 2004, the UN was claiming the janjaweed were systematically killing non-Arab villagers in the region. The Sudanese government denied the accusation, labeling the events as simple tribal warfare. Irrespective of how one labels the situation, up to 400,000 people were killed as a result of the violence, with millions more displaced.

The United Nations-African Union peacekeeping force (UNAMID) stepped in to secure the Darfur region in January, 2008, replacing an underfunded and undermanned African Union force (Sudan, 2010; Sudan Country Timeline, 2010). Although UNAMID has made efforts to secure the region, fighting persists. Currently, 300,000 Darfurians are refugees in camps in Chad, while another 2.7 million are internally displaced living in camps throughout Darfur. The UN estimates that 4.7 million of the 6 million people living in the Darfur region are still affected by the conflict.

The Darfur and Southern Sudan conflicts are similar in many ways. In both conflicts, rebel groups unhappy with the economic and political power of elites in Khartoum fought for greater autonomy and access to resources. The rebel groups represented non-Arab segments of

the population, a fact that the government used to its advantage by arming ethnically-based militias to put down the rebels.

Although it is easy to conflate the events in the Darfur region with the events in Southern Sudan, it is important to recognize the ways in which they are different. Southern Sudan and the Darfur region share a border, but do not overlap. One difference is that while Southern Sudan was given the opportunity to secede in 2011, there are no such guarantees for the people of Darfur. Another difference relates to the issue of religion – while most Southern Sudanese are either Christian or Animist, the overwhelming majority of Darfurians are Sunni Muslim (Sudan, 2011; Sudan Country Profile, 2010). One other issue that is rarely addressed when discussing the Sudanese conflicts is the issue of ethnicity. Demographic figures separate the Sudanese population into three main groups, (1) Blacks (52%), (2) Arabs (39%) and (3) Beja (6%) (Sudan, 2010). These figures do not tell the whole story however, as there are over 600 distinct ethnic/tribal groups in Sudan. These groups speak different languages, have different cultures, and often have different political ambitions. It is not possible to discuss all of the different ethnic groups here, but it is important to note that the groups associated with Southern Sudanese liberation differ from those in Darfur. The largest ethnic group in southern Sudan are the Dinka, a historically pastoralist group primarily associated with the SPLM and the independence movement. The groups associated with the rebels in Darfur include the Fur, Zaghawa and Massaleit.

Joe: Fighting for Freedom

"I would rather be free and hungry than not free."

Description

Joe has a thin frame, very dark skin and talks with a noticeable lisp. Everything about him is suave – from the pressed, brand name clothes and scented lotion he wears to the way he swaggers when he walks. Joe is always well kept. His hair is very short, and he is usually wearing glasses – either sunglasses or designer prescription glasses. Joe has a playful personality and is a bit of a ladies' man, claiming to have had several girlfriends among the center's volunteers.

Joe has been in Israel since late 2008, after fleeing his native Sudan. Joe is Darfuri and, although he was raised Muslim, converted to Christianity as a teen living in Khartoum. Joe is 25 and single. He currently lives with a person he knew in Sudan, whom he happened to re-encounter in Tel Aviv a couple of years ago. Joe had parents and several siblings, but has not seen nor heard from any but one of them for a decade. The only family member Joe has had contact with is his brother, who happened to flee to Israel independently and last year ended up living in the same apartment building as Joe.

Until very recently Joe was a cook at a Central Tel Aviv café, but he recently quit over a dispute with the café's owner regarding Joe's work responsibilities. Since quitting, Joe has focused his energies on preparing to take the TOEFL, a test he will need to pass if he is to pursue higher education in the United States.

Joe is taking a Hebrew course through the Ulpan program offered at the local university. Although he speaks Hebrew fluently, he is in the lowest level Hebrew class because he is unable

to read or write in the language. Joe's Hebrew language abilities are largely self-taught; before this class he had only taken one month of formal Hebrew Ulpan lessons about two years ago.

Reasons for Going to Israel

Although Joe did not go to Israel until 2008, he left Darfur and lost track of his family in 2003. Joe went to Khartoum to pursue better education opportunities and to escape the violence in Darfur, but could not return home as things continued to worsen there. While in Khartoum Joe hoped that he would be able to study, but ran into difficulties. The schools in Khartoum did not want to teach Blacks, nor would they teach the subjects, such as English, that he was interested in studying. Feeling angry that much of the violence in Darfur was occurring due to the Sudanese government's interest in the Arabization and conversion of black Sudanese to Islam, Joe decided to change his religion. He converted to Christianity and began studying at a Christian evangelical school in Khartoum.

After two years at the evangelical school, Joe transferred to the YMCA and began meeting individuals working for a variety of human rights organizations focused on issues related to Darfur. As the Christian schools he had attended concentrated on teaching the English language, Joe was able to help one of these organizations by giving his testimony on what was happening in Darfur. Due to his work with the human rights organization, Joe came to the attention of Sudan's security forces. He was arrested and tortured on a few occasions, leading him and his colleagues to fear he might not be allowed to live if he remained in Sudan.

> First thing, because I am from Darfur and I am resilient, I believe I have future and I will never give up. I tried to go to school in Sudan and there I was not able to go to school. What I observed in Darfur is that people got killed in the name of religion and because they're black and for a lot of things. From there I said to myself that I will never accept

> to go to school here and asked, "What is my future?" Then I ran into the security forces when I was in Sudan [Khartoum] and from there was put in the prison. The security forces were telling me, "You're Black, you're a slave. You're not able to rule us." [After being released] I worked with UN offices and they wrote an article about me and I was arrested two times. The third time they wrote about me and I got into the newspaper and they (security forces) figured out where I was. From there they came (and arrested me) and then they released me, but said "We will give you only one week. We don't want to see you here in Sudan. We will kill you." And the people at the office were trying to send me to Denmark, but it was going to take one month and I got only one week. This was not good for me and so from there I planned to come to here [Israel]. I thought about going to other neighborhood countries (in Africa & the Middle East), but I saw that they are also not good enough for me. Then I came here to Israel and, yeah, I am surviving here.

Joe chose Israel as his destination because he believed that Israelis would be the ones most likely to understand the plight of refugees and that the Israeli government had the strongest human rights record in the region.

> At that time I was not really processing anything. But I was feeling that I was not secure and that Sudan doesn't respect human rights. I expected that when I got here (Israel), I would get respect and support for us, the persons who were affected there [in Sudan]. [I thought I would find] a person to support us to go to school or to get a chance to work for my country, but I got none of this. The reason I expected this was that I compared the genocide that happened in Darfur and the Holocaust that happened in Israel. At least Israel will have more experience with genocide. I was expecting to get help to go to

> school and to work for my country, but when I get here I saw that everything was the opposite of what I was expecting.

Language

Joe speaks four languages on a daily basis. He speaks Fur language with his roommate and other Darfuris he knows in Tel Aviv, though they often switch to English so that they can practice the language and learn from each other. Joe also uses Fur when doing a lot of his shopping, as he prefers shopping at kiosks in Neve Shaanan run by Darfuris. He speaks Arabic with the Sudanese he knows who are not from Darfur and with non-Sudanese Arabic speakers he knows in the community. He uses Hebrew while doing most of his daily activities (working at the café, taking public transport, studying at the Ulpan). Joe uses English primarily to interact with the volunteers he has met through the center, where he also sometimes volunteers as a translator.

> I use English to discuss with a good friend of mine; he is a bit poor in English and me too. I am poor, but I think I am better than him so we discuss in English. Sometimes I go to translate in the [human rights] organizations. Some people, they are trying to help the people (asylum seekers), but the difficulty is language, so I help with translation. English I also use according to the community in which I live. In my community (the Darfuri community) there are only a few people that speak English and if I go to other communities, if they don't understand the slang (dialect) that I speak, I communicate with them in English.

Although Joe is very comfortable speaking Hebrew and can function both socially and at work in the language, he decided to go to the Ulpan because he feels that it is important that he

be able to read and write the language. Joe believes that when someone moves to a country, it is their responsibility to learn any languages spoken there.

While Joe is thankful for the opportunity to learn, his Ulpan experience has not been a positive one. He is the only African student in his class and feels that the teacher treats him differently than the rest of the students.

> I do not even get respect and also I am being treated differently than other students. They treat you differently, yes. I don't think this but it is actually what I saw and what I heard. There are some words that I don't know so I ask the teacher and she can't even respond to me. We sit together and if there is something I don't know then that's the reason for my being in the class; I ask her [about it] and she doesn't even respond. I [ask a] question and she doesn't answer. You know, sometimes she will bring up a discussion and she will question all of us in the class and she's helping the other students, you know, like telling them you will be a doctor in the future or a member of parliament in the future. [To me she says] "you will be, I don't know what you will be, like a driver or something," which is quite a shame. But I do show respect because I am there to learn the knowledge.

As his teacher does not respond to him, Joe has been receiving help from another student in the class who already knows how to write. They sometimes meet after class to go over the material of the lesson and to practice reading and writing. Joe has not learned much about Israeli society or culture from his classes, but some of the stories his teacher tells the class have reinforced the idea that Africans are less advanced and less cultured than Israelis.

> They don't talk about culture but I remember a question she (the teacher) asked us. There was an introduction of Jerusalem and she said that Jerusalem belongs to Jewish

> people and like Christians and Muslims. And this: 1st Jews, 2nd Christians and 3rd Muslims and the Africans they don't even have any religion. But in this case I think she was right because she was in her home [country] and so she can say it.

Apart from the messages he has been receiving from his Hebrew teacher, Joe feels that what he is learning in class is helping him to identify anti-African sentiment expressed through written materials.

> When I start reading and writing, I can feel that I know the language. I will know how to write and read, but nothing will change. But I [already] feel that I understand things that I never knew before. [For example,] how these people are racist and the kind of things I read, some in the newspaper, what they mean because of what they wrote.

As Joe feels that many Israelis are racist and do not like Africans, he dedicates his energies to learning Hebrew so that he can better understand the anti-African things they say and do. The more he understands, the more he can call attention to those abuses and help other Africans become aware.

Education

The primary reason why Joe left Darfur as a teenager was because he did not like the types of subjects being taught in school, subjects he felt reflected the Sudanese government's aim of Arabizing and Islamizing the people of Darfur. He had similar frustrations with his options after going to Khartoum, which was one of the primary reasons for changing his religion and going to Christian schools.

> Education in Sudan is like colonization because you are not allowed to speak your language in the class and what you are studying is the Koran. Even in the school all of the lectures are in Arabic, math [is in Arabic] as well, and you have just one lecture in

> English a week. And the lecture is like 'ABCDE' and 'box' and 'book' and 'pen' and you will study this all year. And people in Khartoum say "Don't study English. English is a Christian language, English is the language of criminals." But you will find the person who is telling you this is studying outside [of Sudan] in English. I went to school in Sudan and the school said, "No, we are not teaching English." After that I converted my religion and I went to an evangelical evening school. From there I went to the YMCA until I finished my secondary school. The government [has a] plan to convert Africans to Arabians and to be Muslim.

While Joe was happy for the education he received at the YMCA, he wanted to pursue more advanced studies. He believed that in Israel he would receive support to further his education and expected that either the government or Israeli citizens would to try to help him get more schooling. Instead of finding support, Joe has encountered resistance whenever he has tried to study.

> I had a job in Ashdod. I was working in some painting company for a year there. I worked one year and then I came back to Tel Aviv to go to school. I went to Seminar Kibbutizim (a local college). I started my class and paid for one month and then the government of Israel said they did not want refugees in Tel Aviv or in Hadera (a city north of Tel Aviv). Then I went to Petah Tikva (an Israeli city east of Tel Aviv) and I was there for one and a half years. Then I came back to go to school and it is really chilling because it is really difficult being a refugee and planning to study because no one will support you to work in Israel and to save money and to go to school. But now I have been doing an Ulpan for almost one month. Yeah, but I don't know what will happen in the future; there is criticism [of refugees] going on.

Joe has begun looking to go to university in the United State due to his fear that the refugee situation will continue to deteriorate and that he will not be able continue his studies in Israel. He has begun preparing for the TOEFL exam and looking for sponsors who might support his study overseas.

Work

Joe has held a variety of jobs in Israel. He has been a painter, an airport cleaner and a server. Most recently, Joe worked as a cook at a café. He decided to quit this job after an altercation with the owner, who wanted him to take over the duties of another employee.

> No, I was working in a coffee shop but a couple of weeks ago a person quit and my boss said you can do another job (the job of the person who quit). I said I did not want to and he said you are Black, you can do what I said. And I said no, what you are saying is disrespectful. I am not going to do that. He said if you are not, you can go. I didn't fight, but he tried to give me another job that was not my job. I told him that if you need help I can help sometimes, but it is really not good, there is someone whose job this belongs to. I like to live free, but not to get used. So that is reason I quit the job.

While Joe enjoyed his job and liked many of his coworkers, he does not miss it. To him, the behavior of his employer was more evidence that Israelis harbor negative feelings towards Africans. Among his relationships with his former coworkers, for instance, none of them extended outside of work. This, to Joe, indicates that their behavior was a façade and not indicative of any real attachment. "The place where I was working, I only had friends there. When we work we are good friends, but if we are not at work, if we meet some other places, they are not even saying hi."

Joe hopes that by not working he will be able to devote more time towards his TOEFL studies. He feels that he was spending too much time at his job, which was taking away from something he thinks is more important than working at a café: his education. Joe says that it is not possible for an African refugee to be successful working in Israel, especially when African Israelis are not able to acquire good jobs.

> I cannot get a good job here because I am African and the law, what I understand [of] it, is not from the citizen, it is from the country. So even if you are working or you are going to the [work] place, they say you can't get anything in some buildings and everyone will look at you strangely. The citizens, they just do what the government says. So that's the reason. Also, I will not get a good job here when there are Ethiopians, who are Jewish, and they are not even having a good job. You will not even find them working a good job. One [Ethiopian] lady told me, "We are really happy now because of you (African refugees) being here. We had nobody, but now we feel comfortable because you are here and they forgot about us in the media. Everything is just talking about you and these kinds of cases, so we are really resting now." Also, that's the reason (I won't find a good job). Those Ethiopians, they have citizenship here and you will not even find them having a good job.

Joe believes that once he completes school overseas, he will be in a much better position to get a good job. He does not know what field he would like to work in, but wants to do something that can help people or advocate for human rights. Once he completes school and obtains work experience, he hopes to return to Sudan where he can use his education and skills to help the people of Darfur.

Culture

Joe does not claim to know much about Israeli culture, but he does feel that Israelis do not like Africans and have little regard for their welfare. Anti-African sentiment is so strong that, depending on the circumstances, many Israelis resort to verbal and physical attacks.

> The difficulty [with Israelis] is first that we get no respect. It (the situation) is open because I can see and now that I am living here I am seeing daily how the people suffer. Some of the people don't have an apartment or even dry bread to eat. If [you want to know if] the people really care for you or not, ask the person who needs help. If you walk in the street, you know Levinsky Street, and they see you they will proceed walking and you will hear them talking behind you and talking about you and insulting you. "Go back to your own country, this is our country. We don't want you here. This is our country and we don't need you here." You can hear this, but you have nothing to say. If you say anything they will beat you. As it happened, a couple of months ago there was someone in the Darfuri community who got killed because he was walking the street and the people came, it was 12:00 or 12:30, and they beat him until he was bloody…but no one cares about this thing. Also, we even learn that as the refugees here we just have a visa for three months and every three months we go to the Interior Ministry to renew it. Now they are giving two day or one week visas and even to get this one week [visa], you need to go to the Interior Ministry three or four times.

Joe says he does not believe that all Israelis are the same, and he feels that some are good. He does not feel that he can fully trust Israelis, however, because he feels that Israelis, either overtly or covertly, support the activities of the Israeli government regarding Africans. Even if a person seems nice to him, they would still prefer if he was sent out of Israel.

> In every community there are bad people and good people, but in Israel they can say that yes we love you and we want to be together but you know they are not really honest for what they are saying. Yeah, this is what I've learned: if we go out, if we meet outside, we sit together and we drink, but if the women are talking, you can tell what they mean. It's the same thing that the government wants because it is the law from the country. Yeah, but they are changing by level, you know. Since I came here I saw that the people were protesting against the refugees in this country and nowadays the people who don't need refugees [here] are increasing. And you know that they don't want refugees, as well. They don't want you, but they don't want to say it.

As he believes Israelis harbor these feelings towards Africans, Joe does not think he will ever become close to an Israeli. He is happy to socialize with them, but says his strongest friendships are with other Darfuris and with several foreigners, most of whom are from the United States. In addition to his mistrust of Israelis, Joe is also uncomfortable around the Arab population in Israel. He says that they hate Africans as well.

> I have no Palestinian friends and, uh, most of the friends that I have are from the USA and from my community (Darfur) and also I have friends from South Sudan. I mean, they (the Palestinians) think that we are nothing. It is something that they think because you know I do understand Arabic and when I am walking in the street I used to hear that (what Arabs were saying). When you meet them they would look at you strangely and when you give them your bag (Joe is referring to the bag handlers at the central bus station, many of whom are Arab), they will start talking about you. But on those things you can say nothing. It happened that in 2010 I was in Neve Shaanan, in the market by the old central bus station. I went there to buy cigarettes from the shop of one Sudanese

> person who has shop there. I went to buy from him a cigarette and then I was going back home and there were two men from Palestine and one he kicked me. I said, "My friend, what are you doing?" He said, "What can you do? You are nothing." Then he attacked me with a screwdriver. I did nothing, I said I'm sorry. I tried to talk to the police and they came, but they did nothing. The police spoke with them in Arabic, but they did nothing. The police said if you didn't come here they would do nothing to you. So I went to the hospital and paid 400 NIS and I got treatment (tetanus injection).

The State

Joe feels very strongly that human rights should be respected. It was this belief that led him to work with human rights groups in Sudan, even when he was tortured for it. It was also his belief that Israel would respect these rights that led him to flee Sudan. Joe is very upset that the government and institutions of Israel have done very little to respect human rights, at least among the Africans there.

Joe believes that while some groups and individuals say they are advocating for refugees, their real motive is making more money by using African refugees.

> Yes, but having refugees is really a good sign for them. The refugees were here and before refugees were here, there were people working at the hotels and they get paid like 5,000 NIS, which is like 1,200 USD. So they said, "Okay, lets help the refugees." But the plan was not to help the refugees; it was to get more money. Yeah, that's it. Since we got here nothing has changed and everyday people are saying that we will do this for the refugees, but nothing changed. It's the same thing that is going on. Also, I am studying general history and how people are acting [has not changed over time]; the

> people in the street [are the same]. Cinema or TV, that's what has really improved [over time].

Joe also complains that African refugees are not able to receive support from a local migrant rights organization. The organization serves Asians, but will not help Africans who are looking for worker protections. If they cared about human rights, Joe believes that the organization would try to help African workers, even if they do not have legal work visas. Their inactivity is evidence to him that they care more about money and obeying the government than about standing up for what is right.

Joe has concerns that he will never obtain the legal right to work, live, or study in Israel. He is therefore trying to find another country that will provide him with these rights. He believes that if he is given these, he will be able to succeed. To Joe, the place where that is most likely to occur is the United States or another Anglophone country such as Britain or Australia.

> In Israel I cannot stay, but now I have no choice. I have no future. My future comes first and, being here, I will not have a future. [I am on a] quest to go somewhere else. I would love to go to a country that respects human rights and I would love to go to school and get more rights than [I had in] Sudan, but there is no chance of that here.

Reflection

Joe is a very motivated individual and has accomplished a lot during his few years in Israel. He speaks better Hebrew than most immigrants and has made connections among the American volunteers, Israeli volunteers and African communities in Tel Aviv. He also seems very committed to helping other Africans in Israel and spends much of his free time assisting organizations with translation. When he was working at the café, he seemed to get along well with his Israeli coworkers and boss. While I took many of these factors to mean that Joe would

have more favorable opinions of Israel, his interview tells a different story. Joe is much more cynical of Israelis than I thought and he does not have much faith in NGOs primarily staffed by non-Africans.

Perhaps Joe's cynicism is in response to his very difficult life. He does not know where his family is and has had to make a new life for himself with almost no support. He is not only cynical of Israel, but also of his own country and of the UNHCR, which he does not believe is helping Africans. Consequently, it is somewhat surprising that he seems to hold onto to a faith that things will be better in the United States (or the West, in general).

Amina: Longing for Home

"I will go anywhere they respect human rights."

Description

Amina doesn't look older than 16, though she is in her mid-twenties and has been married for a few years. She has a small frame but walks with the confidence and determination of a person twice her size. She also wears a perpetual smile, beaming at everyone who crosses her path. Amina is very talkative, a trait that suites her current job as a part-time translator for a few human rights organizations based in Tel Aviv. She is comfortable translating between her native Fur, Arabic and English.

Amina came to Israel in early 2011 in order to be with her husband, whom she had never met. They were married while she was living in a Darfuri camp in Sudan and he was in Israel. The two live in an apartment in south Tel Aviv. While Amina is on a temporary release visa, her husband arrived in Israel when the country was still recognizing Darfuri refugees and he has refugee status.

Amina is currently taking an advanced English class offered through the center in conjunction with a local high school that has a large migrant/refugee student body. This is her first semester taking language courses through the center, and she hopes to continue for as long as she remains in Israel.

Reasons for Going to Israel

Amina originally left Sudan because her work with international organizations in the country put her at odds with the Bashir government.

> I left because I was having problems with the government in Sudan. It was because I was working with an organization and I was translating from English to Arabic and from Fur language to English. I was working as a translator and there were many staff meetings. Sometimes they would be reading, sometimes writing reports. Because of these things they (the government) started to know who was translating. They didn't want anybody to translate and they knew most Darfuris don't know English. Then they started arresting us people who were working with the organization as translators.

Even though she knew the government was investigating her, Amina continued to assist in translating for organizations documenting human rights abuses in Darfur. Because of her activities, she was arrested and held twice.

> [The first time I was arrested] I was held for three days because I told them that I am not the one, that I have a twin sister. So they let me out and my father was also paying them money for me to leave. He said, "My daughter she will not do this thing. She will go out from this position." He promised them so they let me go. The second time I was in jail for 15 days. There were beatings and one of them (the torturers) was smoking cigarettes and was putting them out on my body. And this also happened, but really it was so bad. Even the first time [I was held], I was beaten maybe once a day.

After these incidents, Amina's father told her that she must leave Sudan. As she was a girl, he did not want her to be in another country without the protection of a husband.

> I didn't decide to come to Israel but my father he said if you stay here you will be in danger. I said I don't want to go anywhere, but my father was refusing me a lot. He said, "Okay, I think you have to find for you someone to be responsible for you. I don't know what is going to happen to me in future." I think he was very scared for me because I

> didn't want to go anywhere. I wanted to stay and I was not able to spend time by myself. I had to go with the guards because he was very scared they would take me again and he would not find me anymore and he told me that you have to leave. He said, "I am not going to leave you here." So my aunt, my father's sister, told him, "Okay, your daughter, if she wants to live she will not live like that." She said there is someone somewhere else and he is our relative. My father didn't know him, but he knew his father and he said, "She has to get married. I will not leave her like that." Because we are Muslims, our religion makes a girl to be married even if I don't know the man or something like that. So my aunt told my father, "We will not leave her to go by herself, if she likes to get married." Then they just made a marriage with my husband now, who was in Israel.

When she was married, both Amina and her father believed her husband to be in Egypt. She therefore fled to Cairo, where she learned that he was living in Israel. Amina stayed with family in Cairo for eight months, refusing to go to Israel. She eventually agreed to go to Israel, as the family she was living with began to worry she might not be safe in Egypt.

> The man who I was staying with in the flat, he told me that Interpol (International Criminal Police Organization) finds many people they (the Sudanese government) arrested in Sudan by bad ways and they (Interpol) are searching for everyone who came out. He told me that my father was being killed because they (the Sudanese government) was asking him (about me), beating him a lot and asking where I am. My father he never told me things about that, but when the man was speaking with my father he told him everything. My brother was in Darfur so he did not know all the stuff about it. And my aunt she told me they just are wishing me to go to Israel; if I stayed there, I would make problems for them (the family) and problems for myself, for my life. I really didn't want

> to come here, but everybody was pushing me like anything and they just told the Bedouins and the Bedouins said, "Okay, she has to go today." I didn't even take my clothes. I came without clothes.

Amina had a harrowing experience crossing the desert, where she almost died on a couple of occasions. Once her group made it across the border, she was taken to and held at a detention facility for two months in Beer Sheva. After being released, her husband brought her to Tel Aviv.

Language

Amina speaks several languages in her daily life. While Fur language is the language spoken to those closest to her, she also relies on Arabic and English on a daily basis.

> I speak Fur language with my family. I speak Arabic only sometimes, because some (Darfuri) people don't understand the mother tongue. I use English only if I want to buy something or to go somewhere, or if I want any help from Israeli people.

Amina says that knowing Hebrew would be useful in Israel, but she has not attempted to study it formally and admits that she does not speak it well. Instead of focusing on Hebrew, Amina feels that she should spend her free time improving her English.

> If I could work with my certificate (college degree), that would be better, but [since I can't] I use my time to make my English better. I study English because it is the first (most important) language in the world.

She has been studying English on and off for many years, but doubts her language abilities. She studied the language in primary and secondary school in Sudan and then went on to work on two Bachelor's degrees at an English medium university in Hyderabad, India. She also studied for several months while waiting in Egypt for her husband.

> I went to school in Sudan and I studied English but it is not good. So when I went to India I studied six months of tuition (tutoring; private lessons). The English in India is very difficult to understand because the accent in India is not like here, in Britain or like in America. Yeah, because it is very bad; they can't speak the words fluently…[When I was in Egypt], I knew a family. They were very good to me and helped me to study [English] at the British Council, but for six months only. I studied English, but my English is not that good.

Amina likes the language program at the center and feels comfortable with her teachers and the other students. She believes that the material they have been learning is helping her to understand western culture, as many of the assignments are articles from the US or Britain. Amina believes that this can help her not only if she moves to the West, but also it can help her understand different media (movies and newspapers, for example) she encounters on a regular basis.

Education

When she completed secondary school in Sudan, Amina was sent to India by her father to study microbiology.

> My father, he paid for me [to study in India] because I was not working. My father told me to go. He said "You have to go study in India because the studies in Sudan are very weak. Its not that good, the thing (subject) you want to study here in Sudan." Labs were not available to me, so he told me to go study in India. It is very cheap, it is not that much so I went and studied in that university [in Hyderabad]. I finished in three years and I came back. I then got another new visa for another university and that was for

basic computer. I went back and I studied for two years more, but I didn't finish my studies at that time.

Amina did not finish her studies because things in Sudan were getting worse and she wanted to be home. As she did not finish her second degree in computers, Amina wants to find a way to complete the degree somewhere else. While she would prefer to finish her computing degree, she takes English classes because her legal status does not allow her to study at Israeli universities.

Eventually, Amina would like to obtain a Master's degree. She is not sure of the field yet, but is thinking about a subject related to computers or her first degree in biology. She believes that this will help her find better employment, but says that she likes studying for its own sake and would want to learn regardless of whether it led to a better job.

Amina is not able to go to university in Israel because of her conditional release status, but also feels that the cost of higher education in Israel is too high for her and her husband to afford it. She believes that a country committed to human rights would do more to help individuals like her to study, and she hopes that when she leaves she will go to a place where furthering her education is possible.

Work

Amina spends about eight hours a week serving as a translator for different advocacy organizations in Tel Aviv. As when she was doing similar work in Sudan, she knows that this work is valuable. Amina is frustrated, however, because this work is sporadic and low paying. Amina feels that her skills are being wasted in Israel. She has completed one bachelor's in microbiology and almost completed a second in computers, but her status makes it impossible to get any job in her field.

> Actually, I would like to work with my certificate here In Israel, but they do not allow it because I have a conditional release visa. I tried and they said conditional release is not a refugee [status]. I would like to work with my certificate, with my degree, but it is not allowed.

Amina blames the government for this situation, saying the current policy is a recent phenomenon that has made the lives of many refugees much harder.

> Maybe before last year or from 2007 until last year, it was okay. People were working with conditional release visas because the government was giving this right but now the government says that if you hire people with a conditional release you will pay a fine and they are scared.
>
> Yeah, they (African asylum seekers) can't do high [level] jobs and they can't get a good salary, but they have to rent a house and they have to get food. That's why I am doing the same thing (working illegally on a conditional release visa). But other countries maybe they will help, maybe they are helpful because they are giving people human rights and treating them as human beings.

Amina loves education and would be willing to receive more training in her fields of interest and believes the only thing holding her back in Israel is her conditional release visa. Due to the difficulties she faces getting this while in Israel, she and her husband want to leave. Amina says that it does not matter where they go, as long as these opportunities are available.

Culture

When Amina learned that her husband was in Israel, she was set against going to the country because she knew very little about it.

> I did not want to go to Israel, not because I did not like Israel, but because I did not know anything about it. I didn't know anything about it. It's a country. I thought it's a country, but I didn't know how the people were or something like that because I never studied it before and we've (her family) never been to it before. Most of the European countries I never studied about them.

After arriving in Israel, she found that her husband had developed a number of close relationships with Israelis. A major source of support for her and her husband was the host family that took him in when he first arrived in Israel as a refugee.

> Some Israelis, like my husband's family when he came here, they were really very good and they are very interested in us. They are calling us and looking back in on us. They are very good. Yeah, they are very close to me. Whatever is happening they are there. I can go stay with them, but they are not in Tel Aviv; they are in Be'er Sheva. Not all Israelis are the same. Some are very good in many ways, but some of them are bad.

She has also made several less close relationships with Israelis who work with her husband. They go out to restaurants and bars together regularly and she sometimes hangs out with them while her husband is working. Amina says that she has not made any friends with Israelis on her own. She has made friends with several of the people she works with at the human rights organizations where she works, but as these people have emigrated from countries such as a Britain, France and the United States, she does not consider them culturally like Israelis. "Yeah, some of them (the people Amina works with) are Israeli, I agree with that, but as I see them they are not like other Israelis."

While Amina has had a number of positive experiences with Israelis, she has also experienced a lot of discrimination.

> In the streets when we were walking once, one person threw a glass of beer on me and they were saying they don't want any black people here. They say, "Black people are like cancer, they are giving us disease." But black people are not all the same. There are the bad people and there are the good people. They are saying all of us are just like that. Why? It's not a good thing.

Discrimination against Africans is not only racially motivated, and Amina feels that religion also plays a role in how Africans are treated by Israelis.

> And our religion. They are hating us because of everything, not just because of our color, but also because of our religion. They are saying this is the country of Jews and they say that there are no black Jews.

Amina believes that most Israelis harbor similar sentiments, which makes it more difficult to trust them. While she has several Israeli friends, she admits to keeping them at a distance out of fear they may betray her. "I don't think I will ever have a close Israeli friend because, well, sometimes they will be good with you and sometimes they will change. Maybe they will show you a second face because there is not trust [between them and you]."

The State

Much of Amina's frustrations with living in Israel are related to the lack of support refugees receive from the Israeli government. She is upset that not only can they not work, but that the government does nothing to help asylum seekers adjust to life in Israel. To Amina, this lack of regard for Africans is akin to the discrimination she saw in Sudan and Egypt.

> Life here is not different for me [than being in Sudan or Egypt]. We are many things, many types [of people], but we're all refugees. They are not treating us as refugees, first of all. That's the main thing. They are not giving us our rights. We are human beings.

> We are not finding any kind of this thing (human rights). They are just keeping our rights and just hating black people. What, are we not human beings? And black people they think are not Jewish…this country they think are only for Jewish people.

Amina hopes that she and her husband can find a country that would recognize her refugee status and allow her to study and work. Without the ability to do these things, she is not free. "Of course it (Israel) is not a good place because they are not giving us our freedom like any other country. Of course, they (potential countries Amina would go to) will not say that it is a Jewish country or a Christian country or a Muslim country."

While Amina plans on returning to Sudan as soon as Omar Al-Bashir is deposed, she does not feel comfortable staying in Israel until this occurs. She fears that things will continue to get worse for Africans in Israel and does not believe anyone (not the government or the public) will step in to prevent it.

> Right now, when Omar Bashir is president of Sudan I can't go back, but in the future when he is not there for sure I will be back. I am not going to stay in Israel for a long time because Israel is difficult for us (refugees). Difficult because we can't find any help from the organizations, even from the government or even the Israeli public. Israel is going to be much worse for us in the future. So I am thinking of going somewhere else.

Reflection

Given that Amina's husband was cared for by an Israeli family and they have treated her well, I expected that she would have more positive feelings towards Israelis in general. She does admit to having friends through her husband's job, but she seems to keep them at a distance. Like Joe, Amina's behavior and activities belie her feelings about Israelis. I think her distrust is particular to Israelis, as she did not express any discontent with Europeans or Americans she

knows in Israel, and she has said that she really enjoyed her time in India and made several close Indian friends. Unlike the other participants, Amina seems amenable to going to a non-Western country, as long as they have a good human rights record when dealing with refugees. I question the veracity of that statement, though, as Amina has invested so much time into learning English and has not attempted to learn about any non-Western countries.

One thing I find hard to believe is Amina's claim that she had never learned anything about Israel before going to the country. I am not sure if my mistrust stems from my belief that the issue of Israel is of greater importance in predominantly Muslim societies. It could also be that I don't know how someone coming from a wealthy family and educated abroad would not know about an international issue affecting her region of the world. I feel that my suspicion is borne out by the strong resistance Amina had to moving to Israel when she learned that her husband was there; I can't imagine that she knew very much about Indian society or culture when she left Sudan to pursue her bachelor's degree and yet she did not mention being as resistant. Perhaps I am being too hard on her, though. It must have been very difficult to be forced to leave her family and then be expected to live with a man she had never met and who had married her under false pretenses.

Rafik: Seeking Opportunity

"I came to Israel to look for education, either education or money. I don't care whether it is one of them or something else."

Description

Rafik smirks as he shows me his passport. "It says I am 20." He will not tell me his exact age, but has implied that he is over 25. Rafik has cornrows (a hairstyle) and prefers to wear fatigues and t-shirts. He is a bit of a prankster, but takes his language studies very seriously.

Rafik came to Israel at the end of 2010 and was searching for an opportunity to pursue an education, as he was disappointed with what he had received in Sudan. Although he came to Israel by himself, he is in contact with several people he knew from his home in Darfur. He lives in an apartment in South Tel Aviv with his aunt, her family and three other people. All eight of the people in that apartment are from Darfur.

Rafik's parents and siblings remain in Sudan and are currently living in Khartoum. He is able to use the internet to communicate with them regularly, as well as with many of his friends from back home. He does not, however, publicly identify himself as living in Israel (he currently lists himself as living in Paraguay on all social media). "If I say I am in Israel, there will be problems." Rafik is single and has no significant other or children, but hopes that he will have a family once he becomes successful.

Rafik works as a farm laborer at several farms outside of Tel Aviv. The work is difficult and not high paying, but he is okay with the job for now. He sees this work is temporary and that he is looking for opportunities to complete secondary school, which he hopes will be easier to get support for if he is believed to be younger than he actually is.

Rafik is taking both Hebrew and English at the center. Although each class meets twice a week, he has decided to attend three English lessons each week [he participates in two different classes] and only one Hebrew lesson. He does this because he feels that learning English is more important than learning Hebrew, though he believes that both languages are necessary for life in Israel.

Reasons for Going to Israel

Rafik did not decide to go to Israel because of war in Sudan. He left Sudan because he believed there were no opportunities in the country to find work or obtain a valuable education. He therefore chose to leave so that he could find a better life in another country.

> I went to school in Sudan. I studied Arabic from beginner through advanced in school and then took a certificate so that I go to the high school. [After finishing primary school in Arabic], I thought I didn't understand anything. I just took my book and my mind was empty and so I quit school and that's why stopped school in Arabic. And after that I decide to leave Sudan because there is no money, there is no education. I thought it is better to come to Israel and then maybe if I didn't succeed to study then I can work to get money. In the end, I wanted to get either money or education.

After arriving in Israel, Rafik was detained for several months and was then left in Tel Aviv. He left the city and went to Haifa to find a job, but returned to Tel Aviv less than a year later because there were no educational opportunities for him in Haifa. Now that he is in Tel Aviv, he is still hoping to go back to school, but believes that he needs to improve his language abilities before he can enroll.

Although Rafik did not leave Darfur because of the strife, he says that he now fears returning to his homeland. He says that since he left, ethnic and tribal tensions have become

much worse and that he would be killed if he went back. These tensions are the main reason why his family has also left the region.

Language

At home and among his friends, Rafik primarily uses Arabic and Fur language. As all of his friends also hope to improve their English, they will often use it when meeting together in a group. There, the weaker speakers can learn vocabulary and the stronger speakers gain additional practice talking.

> [Among my friends] I speak Fur language and Arabic. No Hebrew. At home, I have friends who speak English. It is when we have a line together (are meeting as a group) so we just discuss in English. There are better speakers and beginners. If I hear a new word I will ask them and they will tell me how to make a sentence. If we have meeting, then we will use English. Other times, when we have to tell a story, we tell a story in English. We practice [English], each one of us, together when there are other guys.

Although Rafik doesn't use Hebrew among his friends, it is very useful for him at work. As many of his coworkers also speak English, they will sometimes use it when he does not understand something in Hebrew. "I think the language is important to communicate with them (Rafik's coworkers) personally, especially for my boss and everybody at work to understand. They can understand me and I can understand them in either Hebrew or English."

Rafik wants to learn English not only because of its usefulness in Israel, but because of its status on the world stage. Rafik believes that if he learns English well, he can live and work throughout the world. English is also the language of much of the music he listens to and the movies he watches.

Rafik studies Hebrew because of its functionality in Israel. Outside of his community Arabic has very little use in Tel Aviv, and while English is useful, many activities still require some knowledge of Hebrew.

> English is an international language. Hebrew is for the social processes in the country, so it is important for me to learn how to talk in my place of work. I think Hebrew will help me with my life in the country. If I go to the bank and they give me a check and something is written there, (without Hebrew) I am not sure of what is written there; if it would be better if you have something, you don't know. Hebrew is important also to communicate with the people. I think I am not really speaking good, but when I speak a little bit I understand them and they understand me.

Rafik is satisfied with the progress he is making in his English language classes. He is not making much progress in Hebrew, but admits that it is because he only goes to class once a week and does not study very often. In terms of his English, he believes that he knows much more now than when he arrived in Israel. While he had studied English back in Sudan, the classes were rudimentary and he did not learn very much nor did he learn it well.

> Before [studying in Israel], I didn't understand how to practice, especially grammar, but now I know how to talk or learn vocabulary. The vocabulary I've found in my studies is better than any I had before. I knew some English before, a little. I learned it in school in Sudan.

Education

Furthering his education was the primary reason Rafik decided to go to Israel. He only completed one year of secondary school, during which he learned little, and he is very eager to continue his studies. Since arriving, he has had a difficult time going back to school. Although

he is taking evening language classes, he spends most of the remainder of his time working. Work is hard and things are expensive in Tel Aviv, and so Rafik has not been able to return to secondary school. Another problem is that at his registered age (20), he is still too old to receive educational services from the state. As a result of this, Rafik is considering trying to go to another country. "In Israel there is no future, you know. You just work and come back [home]. There is no education so I am thinking of leaving. If there is a way to go to other European countries, it is better."

After he finishes high school, Rafik wants to go to university. He eventually hopes to become a professional, whether an engineer, doctor or something else. He believes that once he obtains the degree, he will be able to help his people. "I want to be an engineer, doctor or an organizer. Everyone wants to be educated, so if I became educated then I could work with an organization and also to help people back home. The people back home don't know any English, so this is important."

Work

Rafik spends five days a week cleaning, organizing and planting on different farms outside of Tel Aviv. He works long days and often spends a couple of hours commuting to the farms, which makes him very tired throughout the week. Rafik did not expect to be planting when he came to Israel and laments that most of the money he makes goes towards living expenses and work-related expenses (such as obtaining health insurance). This prevents him from sending money back home and from saving for his future education.

> When I came to Israel I thought that it would be better than Sudan, but now things have changed because [you must pay for] everything. To work you must provide insurance, health insurance, food. Everything you need to pay them, so this is a little bit hard.

Rafik's coworkers are the only Israelis with whom he has relationships. These relationships do not extend outside of work, but Rafik does like his boss and one of his coworkers, who is Arab. Rafik speaks Hebrew to most of the people he knows at work and talks to the Arab worker in Arabic. While Rafik gets along well with many of his other coworkers, there are a number who seem not to like him. He is not sure why some people don't like him, but takes this as evidence that, as in other societies, some Israelis are good and others are bad. "[Whether I get along with my coworkers] depends on what I see. In my place of work there are different kinds of conversation. Some appreciate. Others don't appreciate. That's why I say all of them they are not together."

Culture

Although Rafik does not have any close Israeli friends, he does not have any negative feelings toward them. He believes that some people in Israeli society are bad and some are good, as in any society. One concern of Rafik's is that Israelis will continue to tire of the African presence in Israel and that this may result in his deportation.

Rafik does not know a lot about Israeli society or culture and he says this is because there is no contact between the Darfuri community and the Israeli Jewish community. He feels that there is ignorance on both sides about the other, something that impedes friendship and cooperation. Rafik feels that as a result of this, his life and experiences in Israel are limited. Those he lives and socializes with are all Darfuri, as are the majority of the students at the center. To Rafik, it is almost as if he does not live in Israel. "I think that my life in Israel is limited because we did not contact with Israeli people, only our friends and our culture. We can do it (socialize, participate in activities) with a [Darfuri] friend only because there are no Israelis inside our culture."

Rafik has not learned much about Israeli culture, but he does feel like he has started learning about Western culture through his English classes. Many of the things he is being taught are small, but Rafik believes they are helping him to understand English speaking countries.

> I've learned a little from my teacher that has changed our mentality. Before we said football, but he said it is called soccer. So now we have changed out speaking. It has changed our way of thinking. Our teacher from Argentina told us this.

Most of Rafik's cultural learning is related to pop culture. He believes this is because his teacher wants the students to be informed about what they see in the media, but also because the students like to ask questions about pop culture more than anything else.

The State

Rafik does not like that his conditional visa status prevents him from finding good employment; he feels that only if he is given an Israeli government issued ID and improves his Hebrew will he ever progress in society. He does not believe that the government will ever agree to give Africans IDs, especially since he feels that more and more Israelis want the Africans to go. Rafik is not upset at the prospect of being forced to leave, but hopes he is able to find another place to live before he is kicked out.

Reflection

Rafik strikes me as the only participant who came to Israel solely as an economic migrant. When he left Sudan, he was not in fear of his life nor did he express any problems associated with the Darfur conflict or the Sudanese government. He now says that he does not feel comfortable returning to Sudan because things have escalated and has expressed concern

about the future of his people. Still, I feel that his motives for remaining outside of Sudan are primarily economic (obtaining an education, finding better employment).

In addition, Rafik has had the least to say about the government of Israel, either positive or negative. He does mention that life in Israel is difficult and that he hopes to go someplace where obtaining work or an education are easier, but he does not seem to attribute the difficulties he is having to the government. It's possible that he is holding back out of fear of reprisals or, alternatively, that his few opinions about the government of Israel is related to his lack of criticism of the Sudanese government. Maybe he does not in general see the government as being ultimately responsible for plight of the citizens and other residents of a country?

While Rafik admits to not having social connections outside of the Darfuri community, he seems to lament this. He would like to have Israeli friends, but maintains the status quo because it is easy. I also think that he has written off the idea of living in Israel and therefore does not want to invest the time into making strong social connections. That said, he has been eager to interact with people at the center. He talks with me on Skype regularly, and I believe he has socialized with at least one of his teachers and several of his classmates outside of school.

Chapter 7

West Africa

This chapter deals with the experiences of participants from the West African countries of Ivory Coast, Liberia and Nigeria. Although there are several West Africans participating in the language program, no West African country is represented by more than three students. The next section provides a country history of Ivory Coast, followed by a profile of Ibrahim. Then there is a country history of Liberia and a profile of Lamin. Finally, there is a country history of Nigeria, followed by a profile of Rebecca.

Map of Ivory Coast

(CIA, 1988)

Ivory Coast Country History

Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire) is a country slightly larger than the state of New Mexico (about 322,000 sq km) located on the west coast of Africa (Ipl2, 2011; Côte d'Ivoire, 2010). The population of Ivory Coast is approximately 21,000,000; it shares a border with five other countries with the Atlantic Ocean to the south. Ivory Coast's neighbors include Liberia, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso and Ghana.

Originally a French colony, Ivory Coast, along with every other French colony in West Africa except Guinea, became an autonomous republic within the French community through a referendum in 1958 (Background Note: Cote d'Ivoire, 2010). It became an independent country in 1960 and Felix Houphouet-Boigny, who had been the President of the republic, became the head of state. Boigny led Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), and Dahomey (Benin) into an organization known as the Council of the Entente. The purpose of the council was to promote economic development within West Africa. Boigny was President until his death in 1993, and during this period Côte d'Ivoire was known for its ethnic and religious harmony, as well as a thriving economy (Côte d'Ivoire, 2010; Ivory Coast Country Profile, 2010).

Boigny was succeeded by Henri Konan Bedie, whose administration came under pressure due to falling world market prices for coffee and cocoa, two of Côte d'Ivoire's primary export crops (Background Note: Côte d'Ivoire, 2010). Government corruption and mismanagement exacerbated these problems and led to a coup by Robert Guei in 1999 (Background Note: Côte d'Ivoire, 2010; Ivory Coast Country Profile, 2010). Guei formed a national unity government and promised popular elections. A year later, before the promised elections, Guei had all of the candidates from the two main opposition parties barred from competing. Then, when early

polling results suggested Guei would still lose to Larent Gbagbo, Guei stopped the process claiming fraud. This led to popular protests that took Guei out of power and installed Gbagbo.

Gbagbo's reign has been characterized by instability, largely stemming from long standing ethnic, religious and regional tensions (Background Note: Côte d'Ivoire, 2010). Much of these tensions surround the issue of land reform. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Ivoirian government encouraged migration to underdeveloped parts of the country in an effort to improve the level of agricultural production (McCallin, 2010). This policy was successful, drawing in Ivoirians from other regions as well as migrants from neighboring countries. With the economic downturn in the 1980s and 1990s, sentiment towards migrants occupying the west soured and there were calls by 'indigenous Ivoirians' to revoke the land and voting rights that the migrants had originally been afforded. Religion and geography came into play as the migrants living in the north and west of the country were primarily Muslim, while the south and east were native Ivoirian and Christian (Polgreen, 2005).

Gbagbo faced two attempted coups during his first two years in power; although both failed, the latter resulted in a splitting of the country into northern and southern halves divided by a French and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) monitored Zone of Confidence (Background Note: Côte d'Ivoire, 2010). This situation left disaffected members of the military in control of the northern half of the country and Gbagbo's government in charge of the south. Although a peace accord was signed in 2003, many unresolved issues, including land reform and grounds for citizenship, persisted. The Ouagadougou Political Agreement was signed in 2007, which promised to dismantle the Zone of Confidence (at that point a UN patrolled region), integrate the rebel forces into the national armed forces, and hold elections.

Although elections had been postponed six times since Gbagbo came into office, an election was held in October of 2010 (Nossiter, 2010). This led to a runoff between the incumbent, Gbagbo, and Alassane Ouattara in November. The results of the second round of the election were accepted by the international community as being free and fair, with Ouattara winning. Gbagbo refused to cede power, however, and the situation remains tense. UN peacekeepers have been working to protect Ouattara, who is acting as the internationally recognized head of state from a hotel in Abidjan. Gbagbo is also running a government and maintains control of the military. The crisis is crippling the economy and has brought ethnic and religious tensions to the fore (Ivory Coast: Rebels take western town Zouan-Hounien, 2011; James, 2011). Fighting between the military and opposition rebels has further aggravated the situation; as a result, the numbers of Ivoirians fleeing the country has gone from an average of 100 per day to 5,000 (Ivory Coast eyewitnesses: Women 'slaughtered by soldiers', 2011; Ivory Coast: Rebels take western town Zouan-Hounien, 2011).

Ibrahim: Clashing with the Culture

"For Jewish people the woman dominates the house or the husband, while in Islam it is the man. I prefer the Islamic culture."

Description

Ibrahim sits silent and stone-faced as I talk to him. Even when it is his turn to speak, he keeps his responses very short and direct. There is a sternness about him that is a bit unsettling, to say the least. I have known and worked with him for several months, but I am not sure if he trusts me; sometimes he seems happy to see me, but he can be very cold at other times. While I

have seen him laugh before, it is a rare occurrence. He is never mean, but he is very uncompromising and forceful when requesting something from the volunteers.

Ibrahim has a thin, athletic frame, fitting a person who has played soccer regularly for years. He is in his mid-twenties, though he looks older. Although a dedicated student, he often appears very tired when coming to class. Ibrahim lives in an apartment in a neighborhood adjacent to the refugee center along with a friend, Mohammed, and an African family. He works as a domestic laborer at different sites throughout Tel Aviv.

Ibrahim and Mohammed are Ivorian, but they did not meet until they were in detention together after crossing the Israeli border. Since then, they have become very good friends. When Ibrahim made the trip to Israel, he did not have friends or acquaintances there. His parents remain in the Ivory Coast, as does his fiancé, who he has not seen for a year.

Ibrahim is a student in the Novice English course at the center. It is his second time in this course, as he wanted to repeat the level so that he understood the course content better before progressing. When extra volunteers are available, Ibrahim also insists on receiving additional tutoring in either English or French; the latter is a language he speaks, but has considerable difficulties reading or writing.

Reasons for Going to Israel

Ibrahim originally fled the Ivory Coast due to the ethnic tensions that were sparked by the 2009/2010 electoral campaign.

> I left Ivory Coast because in my home country there was war and there were ethnic problems. My neighbor wanted to kill me. I supported the president and he supported the other candidate, Allison Oattara. We talked before I left. I am Jula and my neighbor is Buzmani. We were talking and my neighbor would tell me, “We will kill the Jula. We

> will kill you, we will kill you." I said it shouldn't be this way. It is only politics and today the president is like this (but this could change). There is no point to argue. So one day my neighbor seriously threatened me and I said, "Okay, this is not good. I have to leave for another place and if it gets better I can come back, but for now."

Ibrahim left and went from the Ivory Coast to Mali and then to Algeria. From Algeria he went to Libya, where he remained for about a year. In Libya he received word that things had gotten worse at home. "I was hearing that there were some internal political problems and my family would call and ask me, "Where are you?" My family wasn't safe in Ivory Coast." Life was very difficult for Ibrahim in Libya, and he felt that Libyans did not like African refugees, so he decided he should move on.

> I know someone in Egypt, so I called him. We were all in Libya and went from Libya I crossed to Egypt. I crossed the desert. The person who told me to contact the person in Egypt was in Libya. I crossed the desert from Libya to Egypt at nighttime, so from 6 pm until the next morning we were desert crossing. I stayed two days in Egypt and I paid him (a transporter) 300 US dollars to cross from Libya to Egypt. There were 20 people. Lots of people from Eritrea; I was the only one from Ivory Coast.

Once they got to the border, Ibrahim and the others were taken to a detention facility. While some were required to stay there for a year or longer, he was released after three months and taken to Tel Aviv. He spent several nights sleeping in Levinsky Park, but was taken in by another African. He stayed with his new friend for about a month, by which time he had found work and the room he currently rents.

When he left Ivory Coast, Ibrahim did not intend to go to Israel. "I never really thought about coming to Israel. When I knew [I was coming to Israel], the first thing I thought was "Are

the Israelis nice or not, are they going to kill me or not?" While he has not had any major difficulties here, he does not plan on staying. "I don't know [where I will go]. So for now I am here and I want to stay three years and then leave, but I don't know whether is I am going to stay here [for three years] or not."

Language

Ibrahim regularly uses four languages. He speaks Jula (also called Dyula or Diola), the language of his tribe, and French with his friend Mohammed. He uses his limited English to communicate with the African family he shares an apartment with and to communicate with Israelis. He speaks Arabic to his boss (who understands some Arabic, but responds in Hebrew) and to Arabic speaking Africans. Ibrahim can also understand some Hebrew, but is not comfortable speaking it.

> I learned Jula in Ivory Coast. Jula is my mother tongue. In Ivory Coast I did Arabic in school; you had a choice to learn French or Arabic. French, it's from Ivory Coast; it is the language most of the people speak. I started learning English here.

Before coming to Israel, English was not a priority. In every other country Ibrahim has been to, either Arabic or French (or both languages) were almost universally spoken. Ibrahim first realized that learning English would be important after his detention period was over and he was left in Tel Aviv.

> So when I got out of jail to come here [Tel Aviv], we had to go and get a visa at the offices in Salame. The person who was there talked to us [Mohammed and Ibrahim] in English and we couldn't understand, so they had to call another person, an African, to translate for us.

Ibrahim does not like needing people to translate for him and hates that he cannot understand much of what is being said around him. Instead of getting frustrated, he has dedicated himself to learning English as quickly as possible. He takes an English class twice a week at the center and also meets with an English tutor two more times. He and Mohammed sometimes practice speaking English to each other and he practices it with a member of the African family he lives with. While he does not feel he is progressing fast enough, he does admit that others have observed him improve.

> So with Mohammed, we sometimes speak in English and we're actually able to express ourselves, some of our ideas, in English. Also, with the woman where we live, I am able to express myself and she is surprised. She says, "Oh, where did you learn this?" She is surprised.

Ibrahim has also started using a little English at work with his boss, who has noticed his efforts. Ibrahim also plays soccer every Friday evening with a group that consists primarily of Israelis and he uses his English to communicate with them. He considers one of the Israeli players his friend. They go out multiple times a week and talk in English; while Ibrahim is not able to speak so well, he feels that he can understand much of what his teammate says to him.

While Ibrahim is very motivated to learn English, he is not pursuing Hebrew studies. He acknowledges that Hebrew would be useful in Israel and says he would like to understand it better, but he doesn't feel like he will remain in the country long enough to merit the effort needed to learn the language. "[I am not going to study Hebrew] because I know I am not going to stay here long enough. I don't worry about it. I really want to learn English. It is important for me." While Ibrahim does not want to study Hebrew, he has been attempting to become

literate in French. As he went to Arabic school in Ivory Coast, he never formally studied French and remains unable to read it well.

Education

Ibrahim says that he is not interested in pursuing academic studies. His education was an Islamic one in Cote D'Ivoire, and he did not attend traditional schools. He did obtain training in sewing, which is sufficient for him to make a living. Although he cannot practice it in Israel, he enjoyed his trade back home and does not think any more training will help him to become a better seamster. He does feel that his language skills in English are lacking and, he plans on continuing to study until he is fluent, whether he is in Israel or another country.

Work

Ibrahim was trained as a seamstress, a trade he wishes he could continue in Israel. Due to the conditions of his visa, however, he is prevented from doing that kind of work. "So I had my profession in Ivory Coast, which is sewing, so that's what I thought I could do here, but it didn't turn out that way so I had to do other jobs." He does not like the unskilled work he does in Israel and thinks it is very hard. He has to work long hours, as well, because rent is so expensive. Although Ibrahim does not like his job, he is very fond of his boss. "He's really nice to me; he pays me at the end of the month and even gives me some gifts sometimes." He also doesn't have a problem with any of his coworkers.

Even if it were legal for him to work in Israel, Ibrahim acknowledges that other factors would make it hard for him to ply his trade.

> I need to speak Hebrew here. I am forced to understand, I have to understand Hebrew if I am here. And English. Here, if you can't express yourself and if you can't understand

> [others], you can't get a job. So I would need advanced skills for English and for Hebrew.

Ibrahim also believes that he might be disadvantaged in the workforce in Israel because he is male. He has observed that in Israel, many of the high status positions are occupied by women, which he attributes to Israeli culture.

> For Jewish people, the woman dominates the house, while in Islam it is the man. [As a result], here in offices or here in workplaces the women have the good jobs and good positions.

Ibrahim has a problem with this, and it contributes to his dissatisfaction with the country. He wishes to go to another country where men are in control, though it does not have to be a Muslim country. "I wouldn't stay (in Israel)…I don't know where I would go. Maybe Canada."

Culture

On a personal level, Ibrahim has never had any problems with Israelis. He participates in a social activity with a number of them (soccer), gets along his Israeli coworkers and even likes his Israeli neighbors, one of whom speaks French with him on a regular basis. When Ibrahim compares his treatment in Israel to his situation in Libya, he admits that overall people treat him better here:

> So I left Libya because Libyans are not nice. They are mean to any African refugee. Israelis are nice, but when I crossed the border some people had to go to prison. They had to do one or two years. I only had to do three months. That's what I didn't like about Israelis. That's it. They are nice to me and that's it.

Ibrahim has no interest in learning about Israeli culture, which he feels is incompatible with Islamic culture:

> No, I don't want to know more about the culture, but I do want to know more about speaking and understanding Hebrew. Our cultures (Islam and Judaism), they can't link. You can't bring them together; there can't be any link, any interaction. You can be friends with Israelis, you can work with them, but in terms of culture they can't get along. I mean you can't put them together; it can't work, but you can work and be friends."

Ibrahim says that it is these cultural differences that make him uncomfortable in Israel. When discussing culture, Ibrahim expresses a dislike of Israelis. He says that one of the recurring debates he has with his friend from soccer concerns whether Israelis are bad or not. "I have one male friend who is Israeli. We go out to nightclubs and listen to music. I talk about how Israelis are not nice. My friend is like 'No, not all Israelis are not nice. Some are nice and like Africans.'"

Ibrahim is not able to list many of the differences between Islam and Judaism, but does point to differences between how women are treated in the two religions.

> In Islam the woman when she gets married, she has to move out from her husband's family environment. So I'm guessing in Judaism that it is not like that. If the husband wants, the woman needs to wear the veil in Islam; if he doesn't want it, she doesn't. In Judaism, it is not like that.

Ibrahim feels that the different position of women in Israeli has ramifications throughout society. To him, it has led to men occupying lower status positions at work. This situation makes him want to leave Israel and go to another country. "I don't want to stay here. So right now the war is over [in Ivory Coast] but there are still ethnic problems. If I had the financial means I would leave for another country."

Reflection

Of all of the participants, Ibrahim is the only one that makes me feel uncomfortable. It is not that he is mean or rude, but it is often hard to read his emotions and often I do not know if he is upset about something or not. Ibrahim was also the least likely to talk during interviews and the least forthcoming, making it hard for me to understand where his beliefs stem from. In particular, although he felt that Israeli society was incompatible with Islam, he also seemed to have pretty good experiences with Israelis and had more direct and regular contact with Israelis than most of the other participants.

He used the differences in the roles of women in Israeli society (with respect to Muslim societies) as his reason for the incompatibility of the religions, but I wonder how firmly he actually held this belief. He seemed to enjoy receiving tutoring from female volunteers more than male volunteers at the center and never once expressed discontent with the language program or the refugee development center (both of which have predominantly female staff/volunteers).

It also surprised me that he didn't express much discontent with the state. Although he did want to be able to use his trade and knew that the law would not allow him to, he had very little to say about the government. Perhaps he attributes his inability to find work to his lack of language abilities (and not the government), but this view should have prompted him to study Hebrew, which he has not done. It could also be that he is guarding his answers out of fear someone might trace his remarks back to him (he did seem worried at the beginning of the interview that someone in Israel might find out his identity).

Map of Liberia

(CIA, 2004)

Liberia Country History

The indigenous peoples of modern day Liberia first entered the region between the 12th and 16th centuries AD (Van der Kraaij, 2012). European contact with the region first occurred in 1461, when Portuguese explorers reached the area. They named the region the Costa da Pimenta (Pepper Coast) due to the abundance of peppers growing there. Both the British and the Dutch set up trading posts on the coast during the 17th century.

Liberia, which means "Land of the Free" was founded by freed American slaves in 1821 (Van der Kraaij, 2012). In the early 19th century there was a movement in the United States to return freed slaves to Africa, and a number of small societies were put together to fund the project. Thousands of freed slaves were brought to the West African coast between 1820 and 1847, the year that Liberia declared its independence. Several small settlements were formed by these Americo Liberian settlers.

Although the overwhelming majority of the Americo Liberians were of African descent, once in power they implemented a pseudo-caste system in Liberia that put them at the top and indigenous Liberians at the bottom (Van der Kraaij, 2012). There were several differences between the Americo Liberians and the indigenous Liberians that kept tensions high throughout the 133 year long rule of the Americo Liberians. First, the Americo Liberians did not identify with their African ancestral roots and placed a high value on European/Western ideals and cultural practices. The Americo Liberians were also Protestant and thought that the traditional religious belief of the indigenous Liberians were backward. In addition, the Americo Liberians prized whiter skin and more Caucasian-like physical features, which the indigenous groups did not exhibit.

Thus, when the Americo Liberians created a US style government in 1847, it was not surprising that they denied the indigenous people the right to vote (Van der Kraaij, 2012). While the indigenous tribes did not like being under Americo Liberian rule, there were several factors which made it very difficult to oust the Americo Liberians. The Americo Liberians controlled access to the sea, had better weapons and technology than the indigenous population, and had strong financial support from the United States. Americo Liberian rule lasted for 133 years during which time the country became much more prosperous. The country had only one political party, the True Whig Party (TWP), which excluded the indigenous who did not renounce all forms of traditional political and economic practices. During Americo Liberian rule, economic ties were strengthened between Liberia and a number of European powers. The presence of a variety of natural resources (gold, iron, rubber, and timber, among others) helped Liberia to prosper, but much of the wealth went to the ruling Americo Liberians (many of whom could send their children to study in the US). Indigenous frustration at Americo Liberian policies resulted in several revolts and attempted coups.

In 1980, Master Sargent Samuel Doe, a member of the Krahn ethnic group, led a successful coup against the government and executed the President and several government officials (Van der Kraaij, 2012). He then formed a new political party, the People's Redemption Council (PRC). There had been hope that Doe's leadership would improve the plight of indigenous Liberians, but his rule was instead marked by cronyism, tribalism, and corruption. Fraudulent elections were held in which most parties were prevented from contesting, many political opponents were murdered and Samuel Doe was declared the winner by a 51% majority. A coup was attempted after the elections by Army Commanding General Thomas Quiwonkpa and another years later by Charles Taylor, an Americo Liberian and ousted government official.

Although Taylor's National Patriotic Front (NPF) had claimed most of the country within six months and Doe was executed by another rebel faction in 1990, fighting continued until 1996. The Liberian Civil War claimed more than 200,000 lives and displaced more than a million others. Most of the gains in standards of living and infrastructure that Liberia experienced during the 20th century were reversed during Doe's reign and the subsequent civil war.

An interim government had been formed in the Gambia in 1990, absorbing many of the rebels groups that arose during the civil war by 1996 (Van der Kraaij, 2012). A five-person transitional government took control of Liberia until elections were held in 1997. Charles Taylor and his NPF party were the victors of the election and he remained in power until 2003. There was little improvement in the lives of most Liberians while Taylor's government was in power. Illiteracy was over 75%, much of the infrastructure destroyed during the war was left derelict and little was done to improve health and education services under Taylor's administration. Although Taylor did little to help Liberians during his presidency, he did support a rebel faction in Sierra Leone's civil war. He also had to contend with domestic unrest and insurgencies which lasted until Taylor resigned in 2003. Although not as bloody as the period preceding it, the continued fighting during Taylor's reign became known as the Second Liberian War. Taylor resigned due to international pressure and a weakened political and military position and was replaced by a UN peacekeeping force (UNMIL) and a two-year transitional government. The transitional government focused on disarming militants throughout the country, rebuilding infrastructure and organizing fair elections, which were held in 2005.

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was the winner of the 2005 elections and was reelected in 2011 for a second six-year term (Van der Kraaij, 2012). Her administration has been marked by high

levels of economic growth and stability, though Liberia still remains one of the world's poorest countries.

Lamin: Helping the Family

"I never reached my dreams so I want my son or relatives to reach that level."

Description

Lamin strikes me as physically average in most respects. He is neither skinny nor overweight, is about average height and has a rather normal appearance. The characteristic of Lamin's that stands out to me and many of the others who know him is his laugh, which is loud and powerful. He is often the first to laugh at a joke and one of those most likely to tell one. It seems he has a natural predilection for smiling, which he often does even when conveying bad news. He also has a penchant for telling stories and asking questions. Lamin is well-liked by his teachers and fellow classmates, and his mirth makes him seem a bit younger than his 46 years.

Lamin is a Muslim Mandinka from Liberia, though he has not been to his homeland since 1989. He lives with his Christian Ethiopian wife, Grace, and six-year-old son, George, in an apartment in Salome, a diverse south Tel Aviv neighborhood largely inhabited by migrants and asylum-seekers. Lamin and Grace have been in Israel since 2002, when they crossed with several other Ethiopian friends from Egypt. Lamin is currently unemployed, taking menial work whenever he can find it. His wife is the family's main source of income and works in a restaurant. George is enrolled in a public primary school in Tel Aviv. When Lamin and Grace arrived in Israel, they filed for asylum separately. While both received permission to stay in the country, Lamin lost his right to request extensions for his conditional release visa sometime after 2007, after the end of the civil war in Liberia. Not wanting to be separated from his family, and having nowhere to go, Lamin decided to stay in the country illegally. So far he has avoided being detained, but lives in constant fear that he will be found out. Hence he avoids going to places with a heavy security presence and tries to keep a very low profile (not going to areas

where Africans would stand out, avoiding the police, not participating in any disputes or conflicts). He prefers to stay at home and leaves only to go to class, take the occasional job and visit a few close friends.

Background

Lamin was born in a rural village in northeastern Liberia. As his family was not wealthy, Lamin did not receive a good basic education. Wanting their son to understand the Koran, his parents enrolled him in a madrasa (Islamic school) in his village, which is where he studied until he was 18. Lamin had a diverse linguistic background. He spoke Mandinka language with his family at home and among the other Mandinkas in the community. Living in a country where English is the national language, he also learned to speak a variety known as Liberian Kreyol Language (Vernacular Liberian English, to be distinguished from other forms of English spoken in the country). His Koranic school teachings familiarized him with written Classical Arabic and he also picked up a little French through interactions with French speakers from Ivory Coast.

Lamin lived in the village until his mid-20s, when tribal fighting broke out in Liberia. Fearing for his safety and wanting to pursue an education, he flew to Egypt, where he took up menial work and studied Arabic. Originally expecting to return to his homeland, reports from his family and other Mandinka led him to believe that things still weren't safe for his people. He then came to learn that his father had died and that much of his family land had been taken by members of other tribes. While in Cairo, he made friends with many members of the Ethiopian community there, which is how he met his wife and how he first got the idea to go to Israel.

> During that time, when we would make a party, they (the Ethiopians) used to call Liberians. Liberians used to call them to make a party because they are African and Ethiopia is a country never colonized before…It was like this many times so they came to

> trust me. Always me and this guy we used to come visit them (the Ethiopians) until that man traveled to Ethiopia, so I was friendly with them. They would also ask me, "Do you know the idea about going to Israel?"

Reasons for Going to Israel

Lamin made the conscious decision to go to Israel in 2002. At that point he had been in Egypt for more than a decade, and his life had not gotten better. He had petitioned the UN to relocate him to the US, the country to which he feels the most connected after Liberia. After waiting five years, he knew that the request might never be approved and felt that he was getting too old to remain content. Also, racism and a mistrust of Africans among the Egyptians was taking its toll. With no opportunity to obtain a better formal education and the unlikelihood of finding better employment without a degree or formal training, Lamin thought Israel would be better for him and his new wife.

> Before coming to Israel I was thinking it would be better than Egypt. When I was in Egypt, you know, many things happened to me there. I was put in jail because people, you know, we fight and sometimes, as you know, the children don't know how to talk to black people. Sometimes they make (offensive) noises. Therefore I was thinking here (Israel) would be best for me. If you enter here maybe you will see the conditions and you will see the true country before for long time how they relate to us. There (Egypt) you cannot get the freedom to study. I was thinking that maybe in Israel I could study anything in one year because the country has freedom. A freedom country has a system more like the American system than the Middle East. All these things I was thinking when I was over there (Egypt).

Language

Lamin has been attending language classes at ARDC since 2007. When I came to the organization, he was taking both Hebrew and English lessons. Citing a lack of time and his feeling that his English was not improving fast enough, Lamin recently decided to drop his Hebrew lessons to focus on his English. Lamin acknowledges that Hebrew is important in Israel and expresses a desire to know the language, as he is currently living in a Hebrew speaking country. Besides his stated interest in knowing the language of the country in which he lives, Lamin values the role that understanding Hebrew can play in helping to understand his son. George was born in Israel and now speaks Hebrew better than English, the language spoken at home. George's schooling is in Hebrew, and he has progressed so far in the language that Lamin can no longer understand or help with homework assignments. It is apparent to Lamin that he can no longer play a bigger role in his son's education; while his son's teachers speak English, all of the reports and grades they send home are in Hebrew, making it hard for Lamin and Grace to fully track George's progress. Lamin also worries that George's Hebrew studies will stunt his English speaking ability. Given that Lamin and Grace communicate in English, their son does not understand his father's native Mandinko nor his mother's Amharic. While Lamin feels that George should know his tribal roots and speaks to George in Mandinka occasionally, he understands that his son may never speak the language fluently.

Although Lamin says he values the Hebrew language, he does not think that learning Hebrew is as important as improving his English, which he considers a world language. He is perplexed by what he sees as excessive Israeli pride in using and speaking Hebrew, which he feels makes things more difficult for the many people in Israel who don't speak Hebrew as well. In his native land many languages are spoken, but English is a unifying force and a practical

means of allowing different ethnic, religious and geographically separated groups to communicate. When so many people in Israel speak English, why do the Jewish people choose not to recognize this? Lamin tells a story that encapsulates these frustrations.

> One day I went to the market with my friend. We were passing the market and I told him that I need fish. So we went to the fish market. We saw the fish guy but really we didn't know how to ask for anything. We saw Hebrew writing all over the shop and we entered the shop. I told the guy I need fish and he said "Okay, okay. Wait." I wait. My friend also said "Let's wait." We waited. The man came out and he took a fish but he took the fish he wanted to give me. Myself, I would not settle for that fish, the one he took from among the fish, so I told him wait. He looked at me, I said "No" and I took another fish with my hand. He said "No, no! Leave this one!" He just banged my hand like this (gestures). I said "What happened? Why he get like this?" and he said "This one (the fish Lamin had touched) nobody touches." I said that "The one I want to take I will put by myself into plastic. I will give you money. See, there is nothing here." He says "This thing (the Hebrew writing that had been on the outside of the shop) says that nobody touches the fish." I said, "How can I know this?" He had to tell us before we touched the fish. So the guy gets mad and he is shouting. I don't know what happened. My friend said "What happened?" He always buys the fish from this man so there was another problem. The man wants to fight with us. He takes the knife and he comes outside. My friend said "No, no. Leave this guy." So we left the guy like this and I told him "My friend, your country Israel does these things. There are two languages all over the country. They are speaking English. They are speaking Hebrew. So all of the things (both languages) should be in this place. He said "This is my country, this is my

> country." So I left this guy. All the Jewish people are like this. They are proud for their places. So we turned around and we started going to a different area where we could go and buy the fish.

Lamin does not see the imposition of Hebrew as just being orchestrated by individuals, but also by the government.

> There is another thing. They are writing everything in Hebrew all over, all over, all over. The bus schedule that they broadcast in 2011. It was in June or July all these documents were printed. People took them and were complaining because everything was in Hebrew. Hebrew. Yeah, I brought the paper where they changed the system of the bus (bus routes). This magazine, all of this magazine was in Hebrew so you don't know where you are going. I took the paper and went to my working place. I went to the woman there. She said everything is in Hebrew. I said "But why can't you put the English down a little bit?" So I don't understand and she had to explain to me the system.

Lamin is unsure how good his Hebrew will get. He knows that being able to speak and read it would help him in Israel, but he is unsure how much longer he will be in the country. Given that he does not have the legal right to remain in the country, he is worried that he could be arrested at any time and deported. Outside of Israel, Hebrew would be useless.

Although Lamin is in one of the more advanced English classes, he is unsatisfied with his progress. He wishes he could attend class more times each week and is bothered by what he considers his broken English. In part, he blames his difficulties with English on the fact he never went to a traditional school in Liberia. The thinking back then had been that it was important for a Muslim boy to know how to read the Koran so that he would know what was actually in it, not

what people told him was in it. Now that he is a man, Lamin worries he may never acquire the language skills he needs to pursue more education. While he still holds out hope that he will be relocated to the US or Britain, he believes that English could help him find work or education almost anywhere.

Lamin is concerned with his progress in English class, but he is very happy with his teachers. He believes that they treat their students well and engage them in interesting discussions. As many of his teachers are American, Lamin feels that they like Africans and know the English language better than someone from another country. "Really, I don't have any problems with the teachers because most of them come from America and they teach the people."

Education

One of Lamin's biggest concerns is that he may never accomplish his educational dreams. Not only does Lamin aspire to get an education for personal reasons, but for him there is both a religious and cultural imperative to do so.

> I realized the importance of education because our people say that when you travel you can get two things. Either you get money or you get sense. In Egypt I saw education. I saw all over the country doctors, doctors, doctors. So this shocked us. Education is most important and also I read in some book in Arabic that the first thing they say [in the Koran] is "learn". They say learn. If you learn, everything will happen. Also, as I told you, my father had a dream. I never went to school early but there was a dream that I must learn if I get any time, get any facility, I must learn. Therefore, I passed through the Egypt come to Israel. I realize nothing can be better than education and that because everything now is paper [certifications] if you say that you want to do any professional

> job, even if you know it, if you don't share the paper that means it is nothing. This paper is for learning. Therefore I say, "No, I have to study". So I think education is the best; it's the key of everything.

Although Lamin recognizes the importance of education, he is frustrated by the lack of opportunities afforded to him in Israel. He is pleased that he can take language classes, but does not feel this is enough. He has no secondary school certificate and so is not able to apply to colleges or universities; he laments that even if he had the secondary school certificate, he could neither afford higher education nor would he have the proper documentation (as he is in the country illegally). This has not stopped Lamin from dreaming. If given a choice, Lamin would probably study engineering or similar technical field. He believes that this would not only be financially rewarding, but could also be used to help his people back in Liberia. His people lack education, something Lamin feels puts them behind many parts of the world.

> When you are farmer at least you must study farming, but we are farmers and we never study farming or how to be a farmer. We just did it in the African way like this, but we never studied it and this (is something) people need to study. We are studying English. You must know English well; after that you can study the one [subject] you want. That's why I need to know English first: to study. After that I will think about a job.
>
> I want to study agriculture or different things, like engineering. Whoever can learn it to, you know, to contribute, to support because our countries are poor countries. People, they need the help so if you study then maybe you can provide your help. If you are not able to you can do your best.
>
> Math [is important] because the family, our family…or I can say our tribe, the majority of them they are business people. They do business but do not study. They grow up like

> this because that's our tribe. They are the business people. Every day, there are some [future business people in the tribe] born today. We are going like this, but to study properly? No. We never study. So these are things which we have to know. Things like this, this is the dream. Or in the future, if the God blesses, so I can do these things well to help.

It is Lamin's frustration with opportunities for schooling that is the main reason he does not want to stay in Israel. After arriving in Israel and discovering that obtaining an education there would be very difficult, Lamin considered trying to return to Egypt with his family even though it would be both difficult and dangerous. One of the factors that has kept him in the country, however, is that Israel provides quality education for children. Although he cannot really help his son in school, Lamin is confident that he is receiving a good education and that living in Israel can help to secure his son's future.

Work

Since Lamin arrived in Israel, work has been intermittent. Lamin was never legally allowed to work in the country, but found it easier to find employment during the first few years. Worked consisted of a variety of tasks, from cleaning to types of manual labor, and he often went through a headhunter who called him at will. When there was a job, Lamin worked. When there wasn't anything, he didn't. Some of his employers treated him fairly, paying him the agreed upon wage and helping him with transportation; others took advantage of the fact that he had no legal recourse if they did not pay him (or paid him only a partial wage). While he continues to call the headhunters he has worked with for years, many of them don't have enough work to give to him. Since Lamin is usually not working, the family survives on his wife's income, which derives from her job in a restaurant.

Although the pursuit of an education is Lamin's primary focus, his inability to find some form of consistent employment is a major source of shame. Culturally, Lamin feels that as a man he should be providing for his family. "Man, he is not married to woman to be rich; man marries the woman to be a wife." He also has reservations about his wife working in a restaurant, which really saved them financially, but is not customary. In response to this situation, Lamin has taken on much of the cooking, cleaning and looking after his son while Grace spends long days working to support the family. While the state of affairs obviously bothers Lamin, he understands its necessity and has been willing to adapt to the situation in Israel.

Culture

Life in Israel is very different than what Lamin was used to in Liberia. The biggest changes Lamin has had to face is the different social role of women in Israel as well as the importance of education in almost all walks of professional life. These changes have been particularly difficult for Lamin because his inability to find work in this society has forced him into the role of domestic caregiver and Grace into the role of provider. Lamin also worries about the effect that growing up in a Westernized country will have on his son's behavior. Many of the children he encounters on the street in south Tel Aviv seem to run wild and speak much more profanely than would be acceptable in his village.

While he has had to adapt, Lamin values many aspects of Israeli society/culture. He is happy that Israelis are very educated and that the education of children (including non-Israeli children) is highly valued. Lamin also appreciates that Israelis are very direct. They say what they mean and will let you know if they have a problem with you. For the most part, Israelis have treated Lamin fairly.

> Israelis I feel are really okay people inside. The population – really, they are okay. They don't have these kinds of things about whatever. Israelis can be negative or positive like in any society. The positive people, they are friendly also and I can say they like, you know, themselves too much. The only thing I can say - see this – no, no, no. Really, they are fine. When they are with you, really they are with you and they correct you. If they are not with you they will tell you true, "I cannot do this thing."
>
> I have worked some with them (Israelis) and I studied some places with them; most of the time I had my UN paper (when Lamin was legally allowed to work in Israel), we used to work some places and I used to know the different [Israeli] people. Some of them really, you know, appreciated me because when I worked with them they expected me to do my job properly. I could do whatever they wanted and therefore they were happy for the job and they would help me with little things. If I needed some time [off it was okay and they] used to give me some things, but some of them they would not give me my things and then some of them they leave me.

The State

While Lamin likes most Israelis, he has had some difficulties with employers, who he feels take advantage of his lack of legal status. He believes that he has some rights and is upset that there is no recourse for being taken advantage of. Instead of being able to file a complaint, Lamin resorts to spreading information to other members of the community about bad employers.

> They know I have something on them (the employer owes Lamin money for working) but he cannot give me by himself. So myself, I had to talk to him or her, thinking to the good (hoping to convince them to pay) or taking [my issues] to the different places; I told

> people what is happening there (the employer is not paying). I told them I am not used to doing this; you know my right, so give me my right. So it is finished. You don't know, tomorrow maybe a friend of mine, they are not working with you. Also, if you need me sometime, if you trick me like this, I don't like it. Okay, so some of the people they are okay, really. Some of them, you have to come to them or you have to talk before they bring you their goods (the pay). Many people they are not used to this. Me, I am talking about myself, I'm not used to do this. You know my right, you told me, so work with me. Everything is okay so if you can give me my right. You know my right, what can you do? So myself, I know my rights. This society can be a little bit difficult.

Lamin is not happy that there are few protections available to protect the rights of African refugee workers, but is pleased with some of the freedoms he has in Israel. In particular, he is glad that Africans can meet and organize. He believes there would be problems if they attempted to criticize the government, however. He also enjoys the organization of society and the fact that he feels protected (from violence and crime).

> I like, you know, living here. First of all, I am an African man and I like to participate in my [socially] conscious [activities]. You know the African system. [Here] nobody hits me in the car if he likes [to rob me]. We can create the group who can do something better, but not against the country (Israel).

Although Lamin likes some of the benefits life in Israel has to offer, he is frustrated by the fact that he has no documentation allowing him to live in the country. He is forced to hide, while his wife has to go and support the family. This is particularly hard for Lamin because he believes he can tribute both to his host country as well as to his country of origin, but he can only do so if given the chance to work and study.

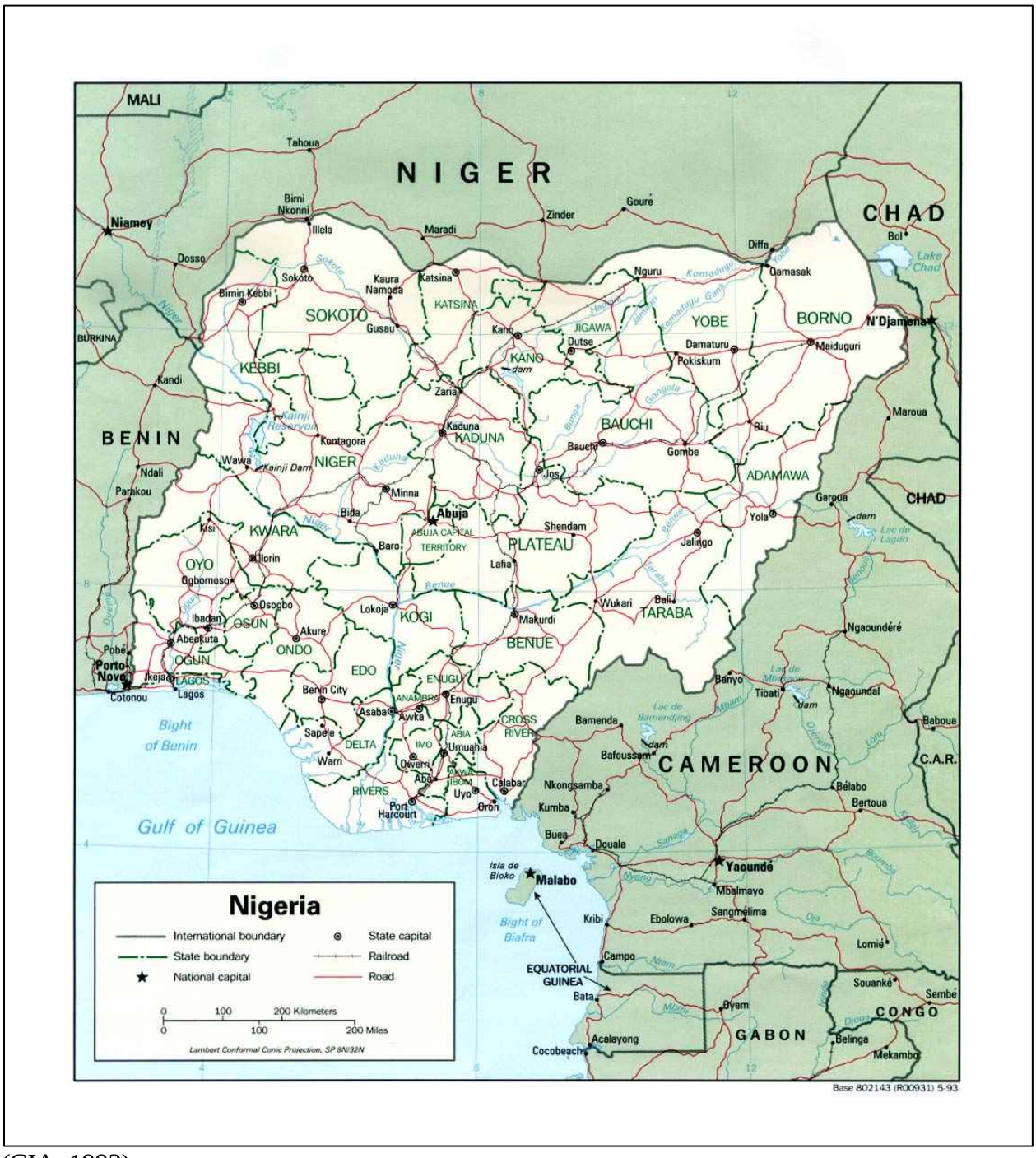
> So I can show myself, I can do something in life. People can benefit from me also. I have not reached that stage (acquired the skills needed to benefit society), but I have some ideas also, yes. So these are the things I am thinking, but I cannot do all these things without something. When you don't have a paper, you don't have nothing. There are rules: when the woman has her tools (legal ability to work and live in Israel), only the woman going.

Reflection

Lamin feels a very strong connection to the United States, part of which is tied to the historical relationship between Liberia and the US. He has also shown a particular affinity to me as an African-American, which may have helped him to open up more quickly. With perhaps the exception of Joe, Lamin is the most enthusiastic of the participants in his desire to immigrate to the US, and I do not think that immigrating anywhere else will fully satisfy him.

Of the participants, Lamin strikes me as the most afraid of his situation in Israel. He no longer has legal status and fears that if he is found, he might be separated from his family. He does not leave home unless he has something specific to attend to, and he avoids certain parts of the city altogether. It bothers him that his these strictures make it more difficult for him to find work. These difficulties have led him to actively pursue avenues to go to another country, which many participants are not doing. Given all of these difficulties, it surprises me that Lamin seems so upbeat and positive.

Map of Nigeria



(CIA, 1993)

Nigeria Country History

Nigeria is a large West African country on the Gulf of Guinea. The country has an area of almost 1 million sq km and borders four countries: Benin to the west; Niger to the north; Chad to the north-east; and Cameroon to the east and south-east (Nigeria, 2012). The population of Nigeria is over 170 million, and the country has more than 250 ethnic groups. Many of Nigeria's ethnic groups are relatively small in number and nine ethnic groups make up almost 80% of the population. Nigeria's largest ethnic groups are the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, Ibo, Kanuri, Tiv, Edo, Nupe, Ibibio and Ijaw. The population of Nigeria is primarily concentrated in the south, but there is also a high concentration of people around Kano (in the north); most of the rest of the country (the middle belt) is sparsely populated.

Nigeria has had more historic empires and cultures than any other African nation (History of Nigeria, 2012). The earliest communities living in the region date as far back as the fifth century BC and lived on the Jos plateau in the center of present day Nigeria. Around the ninth century AD an empire arises around Lake Chad, making its wealth from trade through the Sahara and into the Sudan. The ruler of the Kanem-Bornu empire (named for the regions through which the empire occupied) converted to Islam in the 11th century. Another trading empire was run by the Hausa, who also convert to Islam in the 14th century. A Yoruba empire came to prominence in the 11th century at Ife and continued to expand through the end of the 18th century. A part of present day Nigeria was also inhabited by the kingdom of Benin (which began during the 13th century), which became known internationally for its cast metal sculptures and was one of the first African cultures discovered by Portuguese explorers in the late 15th century.

In the 19th century, the Fulani, a Hausa tribe, declare a holy war on the rulers of the Hausa kingdoms for being too lax (History of Nigeria, 2012). They established a capital at Sokoto in 1809 and effectively ruled center and north Nigeria for the rest of the century. Around the same time, British interest in the kingdoms of Nigeria began to grow. By 1830, several successful expeditions had been made to the kingdoms of the region and a trade dispute in 1851 prompted the British to capture Lagos, which was annexed as a British colony 10 years later. The Royal Niger Company was formed around this time to represent trading interests in the Niger delta region and the region was organized as the Niger Coast Protectorate in 1893. Britain took direct control of the area in 1900, a region stretching from the coast to Sokoto and Bornu in the north.

Near the beginning of British colonial rule, the Niger Coast Protectorate was expanded and renamed Southern Nigeria, with its capital in Lagos (History of Nigeria, 2012). In order to bring Northern Nigeria under control, the British helped put into power chiefs who were willing to cooperate and then administer the region through indirect rule (allowing the chiefs extensive powers). Northern and Southern Nigeria were united in 1912 and the country was expanded after World War I (when the British and French divide the former German territory of Cameroon). Interregional conflicts in Nigeria lead Britain to divided the colony into northern, eastern and southern regions after World War II, each with a separate house of assembly; there remained, however, a legislative council for all of Nigeria. The colony was split again in 1954 into ther Federal Territory of Lagos and the Federation of Nigeria.

Nigeria was granted full independence in 1960 (History of Nigeria, 2012). Regional hostilities persisted, as more than half of the nation's population was in the northern region, giving northerners much greater representation in the national assembly. In 1966 there was a

rebellion of officers from the Eastern region, which is the homeland of the Ibo. The officers assassinated the federal prime minister and the premiers of the Northern and Western regions. In the ensuing chaos, there was a massacre of Ibos living in the North. Yakubu Gowon, a northern officer, became the leader of the country and rearranged the country's regions into 12 states. As this move cut the Ibos off from the sea, the senior Ibo military officer declared the Eastern region an independent nation, the republic of Biafra, and civil war ensued.

The civil war lasted until 1970, when the republic of Biafra surrendered, as its people were starving (History of Nigeria, 2012). The reunified Nigeria became one of the richest countries in Africa due to large oil reserves, but with the wealth came corruption and in 1975 Gowan was ousted from power while abroad. As oil prices fell in the late 1970s, there was both economic and political turmoil, which has persisted up through the present. One government response has been to further subdivide the country (which consisted of 19 states in 1979, 29 states in 1991 and 36 states in 2000). In 1985, Ibrahim Babangida became the military ruler of Nigeria. He bowed to pressure and held elections in 1993, but canceled the elections when it appeared that Moshood Abiola, a Yoruba chief from the western region, had won. This action further spurred Nigeria's democracy movement and the resulting repressive actions of the government increased international pressure for fair elections. Olesegun Obasango, who had been military ruler of the country from 1976-1979, was elected the president. The election of Obasango, a Christian from the south, prompted many northern African states to adopt Sharia (Islamic) law. The declaration of Sharia in parts of the country increased tensions between Muslims and Christians throughout the nation, and these tensions have continued to persist until the present.

Obasango served a second term and his People's Democratic Party won a majority of legislative seats in 2003, although EU observers questioned the fairness of the elections (History of Nigeria, 2012). He was succeeded by Umaru Yar'Adua, a Muslim from the same party in 2007. Yar'Adua abdicated to his Vice President, Goodluck Jonathan, in 2009 after a heart condition became serious. Goodluck Jonathan contested and won the elections in 2011 and is currently serving his first elected term. Many of the problems that began during the 70s and 80s were aggravated during these presidencies. Ethnic, regional and religious violence continued, as did corruption. Boko Haram (Hausa for western education is sinful), an Islamic extremist group began conducting terrorist activities (including the bombing of Christian churches) in 2001, demanding that all of Nigeria adopt Sharia law (Nigeria Profile, 2012). About the same time, violent groups began attacking oil pipelines in the south of the country, many feeling they were not benefiting from the government's oil wealth. The economic situation of the country worsened as well. For instance, by 2005, Nigeria owed 30 billion USD to rich world lenders (two-thirds of which was forgiven by the Paris Club), the living conditions of the average Nigerian citizen were much lower than in the 1970s and many of Nigeria's educational institutions had collapsed or were seriously deteriorated.

Rebecca: Relieving the Stress

"Contrary to our notions in Nigeria that Israelis are always fighting, fighting, fighting, I came to see them as hospitable. They are so nice, bemet (sure/of course)."

Description

Rebecca has an infectious smile that can light up any room and rarely is she seen without one. Rebecca is in her mid-forties, has a dark complexion and a large body frame. She is the mother of two teenage boys, both of whom live with their father in her native Nigeria. Although she misses her family dearly, she believes that the money she is able to send back to Nigeria from Israel has helped the family to stay afloat during hard economic times.

Rebecca is Roman Catholic and considers herself Christian. She is not one for making religious distinctions, however, and believes that people of many faiths (Jews, Muslims, Christians) all pray to the same God. She also believes that emphasizing the differences between faiths has led to the conflict and violence afflicting much of Nigeria and the rest of the world. Rebecca is a member of the Ebo tribe, but she holds no negative feelings against any of the other tribes in Nigeria. As with religion, Rebecca blames tribalism for much of the instability in Nigeria.

> I am a Catholic. I am a Christian. I don't, you know, lay much importance in Christianity or Islam or what. We all worship the same God. That is what is dividing the whole world. You are Christian; you are Muslim; you worship the same place. So we all worship, but by birth I am a Catholic. Personally, myself, I don't discriminate saying "you are this" or "you are that." Now in our country it is deeply rooted like if you are vying for any election, even if the person does not do anything, the first question is "Where he is coming from? From the Yoroba? From the Ebo?" The whole Ebo

> [population] will support him [the Ebo candidate]; the whole Yoroba [population] will support the Yoroba [candidate]; the whole North will support the Muslim [candidate], so they are not after what you [the candidate] know, but where you come from. That is racism. I don't ascribe to that. I am just one person, so myself, personally I don't discriminate. Like now, I know that many Ebos are living in Tel Aviv, but I am living with a Yoroba man and his wife and we are living happily. When they (several of Rebecca's friends) found me the house (where Rebecca now lives), I didn't ask who is living there or where is he coming from? No, [I] just wanted comfort for myself and that they (the tenants) are very good.

Rebecca arrived in Israel in late 2009, flying directly from Nigeria and entering the country on a tourist visa, which she has been able to renew ever since. Since she arrived, Rebecca has lived in several parts of the country and has had a variety of jobs, and she currently resides in South Tel Aviv very close to the central bus station. She shares the apartment she lives in with a Yorba man, his Cameroonian wife and three Eritrean men. The apartment mates get along well, and English is the lingua franca that allows everyone to communicate. Even between Rebecca and the other Nigerian (the Yoroba man), English acts as the medium, since they each speak different tribal languages. While the living situation is very cramped, it is necessary so that "you don't feel" the cost of renting in Tel Aviv. Rebecca now cleans buildings for a living; though she does not like the work, it is the only sort of work she is able to find. She is a teacher by profession, specializing in primary school education. While she misses teaching profusely, Rebecca understands that she lacks the legal right to teach in Israel and has come to accept her more Spartan living conditions.

> Yeah, but what can I do? There is no other job that a tourist can do. My house in Nigeria is very big and I have my own room, but here you have to manage with many people. You have to manage sharing this, sharing that. In my own place [in Nigeria] I have my private bedroom; private this, private that, but here I have to adjust.

Rebecca has decided that if she is allowed to stay until the end of the year, she will return to Nigeria at the end of it. While things in Nigeria seem to be getting worse, she misses her family and does not want to do domestic labor forever.

Reasons for Going to Israel

Rebecca decided to move to Israel because her life in Nigeria had become too stressful. The pressures of trying to take care of a family on a small income and living in a crowded, polluted and dangerous city (Lagos) had increased her blood pressure and made her feel perpetually tired. The increased lack of security in Nigeria over the past several years only contributed to Rebecca's stress. Believing that Israel was holy, Rebecca decided to come here for both physical and spiritual rejuvenation.

> I took a plane here. Generally we believe that Israel is a holy land, so whenever you have a problem you touch your feet on this holy land and it is solved. That is our belief. We have this strong faith. That is what pushed me to come here.

Before coming to Israel, Rebecca based her thoughts on Israeli society and culture on her knowledge of the Bible. Believing Israelis to be a very religious people, she had a different perspective of the type of life she would encounter.

> They have not taught us about the people of Israel as a people or their culture or tradition, no. Through my elementary knowledge I knew that they are very religious. Well, the Bible tells us so. And, again, the foundation of Israel as a nation is founded on religious

> beliefs and practices. So, that's the reason that has made many of us to come to the holy land. This is our belief; it is the general belief of people outside [of Israel]. When I was coming I didn't know I would see that everywhere they are selling beer, vodka and this and that. [Seeing] someone drinking and lying on the street? I never thought the Jewish people were all worldly people. <Laughs>

Although Rebecca came to Israel officially as a tourist, she had been told that the government often allowed Nigerians to extend their visas and she hoped to stay in the country until she felt ready to return to her country and family. Rebecca does not cite this as a reason for coming to Israel, but it seems that the strength of the Israeli Shekel played a part in her moving to Israel, as well. Even working as a cleaner, the little money she is able to send home is helping to keep her family afloat.

> Well, I like the little money they are giving us. Their money is very high compared to our Naira, which is greatly devalued. Their currency is very, very high compared to my home, so any amount they give you, if you change to our Naira it becomes big money (laughs). They [my family] get it (the money).

Even though she misses her family, Rebecca has remained in Israel because she feels that living here has reduced her stress and brought her peace. Even given the high cost of living in Israel, if Rebecca were allowed to bring her family to Israel, she would never return to Nigeria. Not only is life safer in Israel, but the people and way of life here are much more pleasant than life in Nigeria.

> If my family were here, if I had the opportunity to bring them here, I wouldn't think of going back to Nigeria in my life because the security situation here is superb. [The security is] very, very nice; the way the government plans the whole thing is very, very

> nice and they are very accommodating, the Jewish people themselves. I am not talking about the migrant workers who come here; they are the people who are not friendly at all. The migrant workers, I don't like to mention from which countries, but the Jewish people that own here, they are so nice. They are very, very accommodating, contrary to what we are warned [about]. You know what we used to think before I came here? The Jews they are this, they are that. Ohhhh!

Language

Rebecca started taking Hebrew classes in early 2010, but never completed her course due to the demands of her work. Two years later she has returned to the classroom as a novice Hebrew student. Rebecca believes that she has not significantly improved in her Hebrew language abilities during this time because working takes up so much of her time. The only reason she has been able to return to Hebrew class is that her current boss has allowed her to forfeit four hours of pay each week so that she can leave her job early to come to the language center.

> Coming here makes me lose a substantial amount of money because we are paid by the hours and [for] any hours that we are in Hebrew that week, I normally forfeit about four hours. [This is because] coming from my work it takes almost four and a half hours, so that is the financial aspect of it.

Rebecca feels that she has made a lot of progress in understanding Hebrew since she returned to school. When she started, she only knew the basic greetings, but she is proud to say that she can now express simple sentences in the language and can read some words. She credits both her teachers and herself for the strides she has made, however, she is far from her goal of

becoming fluent in the language. Knowing Hebrew would help her become eligible for better domestic labor jobs and might also be useful once she returns to Nigeria.

> I want to be communicating fluently with Israeli people and other people that speak Hebrew. Second, when we were looking for jobs, the first question they would ask is "Do you speak Hebrew?" And my answer was always negative. They would say no; they only need people that speak Hebrew, so I thought that if I learned Hebrew it could enhance my chances of securing a better job. And then to communicate; I like to interact with the Israeli people, but the language barrier prevents [it].
>
> I want to express myself very well in Hebrew, to speak fluently and to write too. You don't know where this world leads; maybe will I will go to Nigeria and maybe find an Israeli company and they may need me or I don't know what.

While Rebecca is dedicated to learning Hebrew, she says that most of her countrymen aren't. She attributes this to their philosophy that the Israeli government could kick them out at any time, at which point their Hebrew would become useless. Nigerians aren't protected by Israeli law, like asylum seekers from Eritrea and Sudan. Since they don't know when they may have to leave, most Nigerians prefer not to focus on studying language and instead put all of their energies into making money.

> [Most Nigerians say] I wouldn't study. There is nobody to teach me. Their problem is, you know, I may go to the Ministry of Interior to renew my papers and they will say, "No. It is okay. You start going." That is how they do Nigerians because we are not refugees. If we were from Sudan or Eritrea, then they would regard us as refugees because there is war. But Nigeria, we don't [have a war] so we are just here at the mercy of God. So any time they can stop giving me these three-month tourist visas. Then I'll

> go; then the Hebrew lessons will stop. That is it. That is my, that is our predicament, as Nigerians always tell me. I tell them to come [to class] and they say no. When their time is finished, they [the Ministry of Interior] will cancel their [right to stay and] work. What it (studying Hebrew) means is to come and waste time.

Rebecca does not accept her countrymen's explanations for not studying Hebrew and is upset at their behavior. She thinks their apathy is particularly lamentable because the classes offered by the language center are virtually free. While many tourists and immigrants to Israel pay up to 9,000 NIS (about 2,400 USD) for two months of classes, the language center charges only 150 NIS (about 40 USD). Even so, it is impossible to get Nigerians to go study. Of the (approximately 150) African students taking language classes at the center, Rebecca believes that she is the only Nigerian. In order to coax other Nigerians to learn Hebrew, she has gone so far as to offer to pay for their lessons herself and yet they still won't participate.

> Well, the thing I like most is that it [the Hebrew class] is free. In my quest to study Hebrew I went online and on the internet and looked for addresses for Hebrew teachers at the Hebrew Ulpan and some said that they charge 9,000 NIS per course. The lowest I got is 4,500 NIS and it is online, not even a face-to-face teacher-student relationship. I said eh? So when I hear about this course and it is free, its only 150 NIS for the materials we use. I said "Ho!" I've been telling many people please come and register here, that it is free, but you know many Nigerians they say they don't want the language, so it depends on individual.

Education

Rebecca is not interested in pursuing additional education outside of her language studies. She was very happy as a teacher and does not need any more training in order to

practice. She does feel that many Israelis could use a good English teacher and she wishes that she could help them by teaching. Rebecca does not feel she could be helpful at this point, however, because she has not become proficient in Hebrew.

> Like I said earlier, I am a qualified teacher. I can teach English because they don't know English, but the problem is how do I teach English when I don't understand Ivrit (Hebrew). I need to explain [the material] and you know this is the [official] language so, yeah, that is a problem.

Work

Rebecca finds her work as a cleaner to be very difficult and does not like what she does. Not only is it manual labor, which she never did back in Nigeria, but the Israeli work ethic is much different than the Nigerian one and this wears her out.

> The mode of their work their avoda (work) is quite different from our own. You have every time "Yalla, Yalla (let's go, hurry up)!" This makes us very weak. We are not trained in that form to, you know, work, but here you are mandated to [work hard] in order to earn a living. That is the worst thing [about living in Israel], but down in our country the situation is that we are all lazy.

It is not only the difficult work that bothers Rebecca, it is that she liked her former profession (teaching) and she misses it. She feels that she is a good teacher and could benefit many people if given a chance.

> The hardest thing that I don't understand…like I told you I am a teacher and teachers in our country don't clean. You have cleaners and here I just abandoned my profession, cleaning houses and it is ehhhh (sighs). I had thought I would be allowed to teach. I am a teacher, so I thought I'd be allowed to teach and because they (other Nigerians) said

> that in many other countries, they (foreign governments) would allow you to practice your profession, but, you know, it is not like that here.

As Rebecca expects to remain in Israel until the end of the year, she does not expect to find better employment before returning to Nigeria. Rebecca does hold out hope that her experience in Israel might benefit her upon returning home, especially if she is able to improve her Hebrew and understand Israeli culture better. She believes that her time in Israel will make her more appealing to any Israeli companies doing business in Nigeria.

> The only thing is, like I said, that if I go back to Nigeria, maybe if I find an Israeli company, then I can go there and do an application. They may employ me, I don't know. This has pushed me [to want to study Hebrew]. This is why I told you that I am interested in communicating with the people while I am in their country.

Culture

Before coming to Israel, Rebecca had been worried about going to the country. Most of her reservations stemmed from the things she had heard about the Israel-Palestine conflict. Since arriving, her perspective has changed and she doesn't think those portrayals were accurate at all.

> I had a very negative mind before coming here. We (in Nigeria) have been hearing Gaza, Gaza War, Gaza War and this press, the TV, we normally watch it in the evening. Negative reports, it is only showing us those people killed. I said "Heee! What is all this about?" So I was afraid. Myself, I was touching the Holy Land for my health, you know, but honestly when I came here I found that the people are so nice and so very accommodating. What I honestly saw was that they don't strike these people (the Palestinians), they are on the defensive side. The Israelis, they only attack them after many warnings and they (the Palestinians) are firing many rockets. When someone is

> firing from a car, you [should] fold your arms? <sucks teeth> So they (Israelis) are good, they are so nice, contrary to the beliefs of many people in the world, bemet (of course). I think the problem they have is that the other people have, you know, have more propaganda; making use of the media, they are projecting their settlements so that the whole world is now tilted against Israel. They (the rest of the world) don't see any good thing, but I think that if they are, you know, bringing some of this thing (the Israeli side) to the media for the whole world to see; [for example], I never heard of Israeli refugees. I never knew there are refugees in Israel, but there are a lot of Jewish refugees. Why is the world not talking about this? Only Arab refugees! They are not interested in bringing these things to the limelight, to the newspaper or to the media to announce [it]. Because of that I think that is why they (the rest of the world) have negative feelings about them (Israelis). They keep these [things quiet], so they are by themselves. So I don't know. Israelis they are nice people, they are nice.

Rebecca has story after story about the ways in which Israelis have shown her kindness. In each case, she is quick to point out that those who helped her did so without regard to her race or religion and without the expectation of receiving something in return.

> In 2010, I was sick. I had some hypertensive [illness], but the ARDC wanted me to participate in the May Day (International Workers Day). Yeah, we celebrated it on 30th of April because May Day was a Saturday, so they shifted it down. They put their t-shirt [on me] and then I was shivering so this woman, just where she is sleeping (at her home), she told me to lie down there. On her own bed sheets, that she used to cover herself, she used [them] to cover me, to ensure that we all have the same thing. I was saying "Hey, this woman isn't even disturbed?" [She wasn't] saying "This woman is Black and I am

> serving on her. You shouldn't sleep where I am sleeping." [Instead,] they gave me medicine. So this thing touched my heart so much and many other Jewish people are the same. There are many of them that I encountered. This is why these people are very, very contrary to what people view about them. They are so accommodating and very, very caring. Kind hearted. Honestly.

Rebecca contrasts much of what she says about Israel with Nigeria. To her, Israel and Nigeria are at opposite ends of a spectrum, and she does not have positive feelings about her homeland.

> There are so many ethnicities in Nigeria. That is what our problem is now. It is just trying to divide the country, honestly. Ethnic groups, they don't want to see each other. I don't know why. Myself, I am living happily now with the Yoroba and his wife from Cameroon. They are a very nice family. So people shouldn't have preconceived notions [about other groups].
>
> In Nigeria we are living in the system and to survive everybody has to be corrupt. Then religion: they have Christianity and Islam; see how they are killing, killing. The country is just a trouble to the world.

Although Rebecca has not achieved fluency in Hebrew, she has made several close Israeli friends. All of Rebecca's Israeli friends have been women in their 50s or 60s. She lived with one of them for several months, but eventually left her friend's home because her friend did not want her cooking Nigerian food in their apartment. Up until now, even after many of her friends have introduced her to different Israeli dishes, Rebecca has not developed a taste for Israeli food. In addition to introducing Rebecca to Israeli cuisine, her friends have been the primary source of information regarding Israeli culture and language. For instance, Rebecca was taught some of

the rules regarding Kosher eating and the linguistic significance of the name Bethlehem, the birth place of Jesus.

> The little I know is from where I was working. They have these two [categories]: they sell one for chalav (dairy, milk) and one is for meat, though my employer is not religious. If they are religious I should not be mixing plates for meat and for this. I said "Ah, is this not the same thing?" They said no. It is not the same thing. That's their culture. Then they used to pray though I am not sure if I had studied this I would have told you. You know, I am not so conversant about how they (Jewish people) behave. The only thing is that they, the native indigenous Jewish people, are generally very accommodating and very nice people.
>
> No, she (a friend of Rebecca named Miriam, who is an immigrant from Eastern Europe) prefers Israel because the Jewish people are accommodating and things are very nice compared to her own country. She used to invite her people here to work on invitation, on her invitation, yes. She is meaning to teach me their (Israeli) language and some of their culture. Like, she was the one that told me the meaning of bait is house and lechem is bread, so house of bread is bait lechem. When our church went on a tour of holy places and I answered the question, "What is the meaning of Bethlehem?" Bethlehem, I know that place because of this Miriam. I just sound out some places. Beit lechem. So she teaches me.

Although she has picked up several things, Rebecca's knowledge of Israeli culture or Judaism is relatively limited. She expresses interest in learning more about Judaism and says she would like to go to temple, though she has yet to do so. At the same time, she is wary of people

who try to convince her that she should convert to Judaism, something many of her friends have tried to do.

> I have been saying that I would go to their synagogue one day just to know what is happening. I didn't know they allowed other faiths to come there. They say "Yes, you can go there." I am not particular about which church or which faith. I would like to know [about Judaism] instead of sitting back and condemning other people's religion that you don't know about. It is better that you go there and participate and see what is happening and how they preach and how they conduct this thing. Even though I am a Pope Catholic, at times I don't go to there (Catholic Mass), I go to these other Pentecostal churches. It is the same God who is watching, so I am not particular.

Although Rebecca is interested in Israelis and Israeli culture, she has problems with many of the foreign workers in Israel. She does not want to specify which nationalities bother her, but she believes that they are racist and hate Africans.

> [I won't say] from specific places, but I am sorry. I can't make sure of this, but if you live everywhere in Israel they are not Israelis they are just workers and they treat Africans rather poorly. Yes, they hate Africans. They hate Blacks and they are reckless. Unfortunately, most of them are the people that are running [the domestic labor businesses]. That's the problem I have with other groups [in Israel].

The State

Rebecca is very thankful that the Israeli government continues to renew her tourist visa. From her perspective, there is no reason for them to do so except out of compassion for those who petition to stay. Rebecca makes a distinction between refugees and those who are 'tourists,' or coming from countries not officially recognized by the UN being war torn. To Rebecca, if the

UN changed its policy with respect to Nigerians, Israel would act accordingly and provide more rights to Nigerians.

> All Nigerians, they come here [as tourists], I told you. The people that are getting paper [official residence documents], they marry Israelis or they bear children and if the children are [younger than] eight years or so, but all of us come as tourists. In Eritrea and Sudan there is a war, so they come as refugees and we Nigerians, Cameroonians, Liberians and these Ghanaians, we come as tourists. Because there is no war, there is no physical war, though we have an economic war. Yeah, but the UN does not recognize that. The only one [war] they recognize is [physical] war. There is no sanctuary country; Israel is just accommodating us on humanitarian grounds. They are under no obligation, no, no.

Rebecca does feel that the UN should change its position with respect to economic migrants and also feels that more should be done internationally to help people like her. Not only should economic migrants be recognized by the UN, but Rebecca feels that in the case of Nigeria, a war-like situation does exist.

> Yes, I would have suggested that not just war [be recognized]. Physical war is what is happening in Nigeria. Boko Haram is killing, going to churches and burning them. It is hard to qualify as a refugee [if you are from Nigeria]. The situation [is that] people are running for their lives, being killed in their own country. Honestly, I would prefer it if I had rights and for the UN to recognize us. Yes. Our life is no more safe there.

While she is happy to have a tourist visa, Rebecca believes that her status makes her life more difficult. She exists in Israeli society with almost no legal rights and she must continue to

appeal for an extension every few months. Her tenuous legal status makes potential employers less willing to employ her and prevents her from applying her trade (teaching).

> [Finding work] is very important, but the type of visa they give us, especially Nigerians…every three months [you have to go to the Ministry and] you are tired. The employers don't like it. The employer that gives me jobs, they don't like it; they prefer you have a one-year visa so that you won't be taking permission to go to the [Ministry of} Interior. They know that it (the three month visa) is not permanent and that the Israeli government can just tell you to go anytime, so they don't like employing [three-month visa holders]. So it is only these menial jobs [that we get] that are not permanent.
>
> I am a teacher by occupation. Yes, I am teaching very, very well, but with the type of visa I have nobody will take me. It is not the employer; he may be willing, but it is the law that doesn't allow them. There are many professionals here, there are even engineers, but they don't have this thing (the permission to work) to practice their profession, nor do they have rights. I still think that the Israeli government, they are fair to all because even though we do not have a type of [work] visa, still people still accommodate us.

Althought Rebecca associates most of her problems in Israel with the state, she still has a favorable opinion of it. In contrast, she has a very low opinion of the Nigerian state, which is the only other state that she is familiar with.

> The security situation in my country? Ah, cry, call the police, nobody will come. Like if somebody is attacking you and you call the police they won't come until the robbery has finished good, then they will come with it? Then the roads…you see, there are no pot holes [in Israel]. Their vehicles are all sound. They are maintained. There in my

country, no. [The vehicles are] just old and rickety and the bad roads have killed millions of Nigerians. The transport system is well coordinated here. Government enterprises (you know and the price is subsidized it is individual it is private cost. And the health system; I told you how I was sick and the hospital didn't ask me for any money until after the treatment and after they did all the tests, I mean everything. I said, "Eh? What type of country is this?" I just wish my country was like this. Honestly. So here is the direct opposite.

The country is very corrupt; officially there is nothing you are doing in that country without offering bribes. The other countries, like African countries, they see Nigeria as the jail of Africa. So these things happening, they feel Nigeria has failed the Africans. You know, they (Nigerians) have everything in this world to make them stop. It is very crazy. They have oil, they have gold, all the minerals. There is no state in Nigeria that doesn't have minerals. Like, in my home town, in my home district, we have coal, all the minerals. If any of the population wants to build a house, just dig a small hole and you will see coal everywhere. You know, the country is too blessed, but the leaders are a problem. So that is [why] now Nigerians come to other countries to do the washing, to do a menial job. No, bad leaders are a problem.

Reflection

Rebecca was the only participant to have a positive impression of both Israelis and the Israeli government. As she is quick to contrast Israel to Nigeria, her positive feelings for Israel probably relate to her very poor perception of Nigeria. Yet, many of the other participants have very poor perceptions of their home country governments, and they do not see Israel as being so great. Perhaps it is the positive experience Rebecca has had with older Israeli women? Of the

participants, she is the only one who expressed living and dealing with women over 50. It's possible that this age cohort has a more sympathetic view of older African women.

It is also interesting that Rebecca appears to attach some of the blame for her inability to teach on the UN. If they viewed Nigeria as war-torn, Nigerians would be able to qualify as refugees. She does not expect the Israeli government to act without such a mandate, however, and so does not think the government should grant Nigerians the right to work. She does not seem to realize that most of the others who come from countries recognized by the UN also cannot work in their fields of interest.

Rebecca's perspective complicates things a bit for me. Before talking to her, it seemed as if everyone I talked to had a negative perception of the government's policies (some more than others). To find someone who is subject to the same laws and yet who agrees with them is difficult for me to explain. Why is Rebecca okay working a difficult, menial job and why has she shifted the blame onto the UN?

Also, from where does Rebecca's distrust of foreign workers stem? She is afraid to give specifics about any interactions with them, yet she unabashedly says that they are racist and that she has a problem with them. None of the other participants expressed having any negative experiences with foreign workers, but perhaps this is because most do not work alongside them.

Chapter 8

Horn of Africa

This chapter deals with the experiences of participants from the Horn of Africa countries of Ethiopia and Eritrea. Not only did it make sense to group these countries based on geographic proximity, but both countries were parts of the same country until relatively recently and therefore have a common history. The next section provides a country history of Ethiopia, followed by a profile of Brehane. Afterward there is a country history of Eritrea and a profile of John.

Map of Ethiopia

(CIA, 1999)

Ethiopia Country History

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is country in eastern Africa. It borders five countries: Sudan to the north-west; Eritrea to the north-east; Djibouti and Somalia to the east; and Kenya to the south (Ethiopia, 2012). The country occupies about 1.1 million square kilometers, though it is still engaged in border disputes with both Eritrea and Somalia over contested regions. The population of Eritrea is estimated at more than 80 million, with the highest concentrations of people living in the northern and southern highlands. Overall, Ethiopia is one of the least urbanized countries in the world.

There are more than 70 languages spoken in Ethiopia, most belonging to either the Semitic, Omotic or Cushitic language families (Lewis, 2009). The largest of the Semitic languages spoken in Ethiopia is Amharic, which is the native language of the Amhara (about 25% of the population). As Amharic used to be the official language of Ethiopia, the language is used as a lingua franca by most of the population. The second largest group of Semitic language speakers are the Tigray (about 14% of the population), who speak Tigrinya. Smaller groups in Ethiopia include the Gurague and Hareri. It should be noted that while language is often used to make ethnic distinctions among Ethiopians, this may not always correspond to ethnic identity (i.e., several groups may have the language, but belong to different tribes).

Ethiopia is the home to the oldest civilization in Africa and one of the oldest civilizations in the world (Ethiopian History, 2012). Archeological evidence suggests that the earliest human ancestors lived in the area about five million years ago. Ethiopia is referred to in the writings of ancient Greek historians as well as the Old Testament of the Bible, however there is controversy as to whether these mentions refer to civilizations living in modern day Ethiopia or other societies. The first kingdom for which there is considerable evidence is Axum, which came to

prominence in the 1st century BC. The kingdom lasted almost a millennium and is believed to have conquered territory as far away as Yemen.

Axum was converted to Coptic Christianity around the 4th century AD by missionaries from Egypt and Syria, but it was cut off from much of the Christian world after the 7th century as North Africa was converted to Islam (Ethiopian History, 2012). This also meant that Ethiopia was cut off from Europe for several centuries, not making contact with the Portuguese until the early 16th century. It was also during the early 16th century that Ethiopia was invaded by the Islamic state of Adal (a multi-ethnic Sultanate occupying parts of present-day Somalia, Djibouti and Eritrea). The Abyssinian-Adal War lasted from 1527-1543 and was won by Ethiopia with help from the Portuguese.

While the Portuguese brought increased trading opportunities to Ethiopia and military assistance against the Muslims, they also brought Jesuit missionaries intent on converting the Ethiopian Emperors (and by extension, their subjects) to Catholicism (Ethiopian History, 2012). This created social and political unrest, which, eventually led to the expulsion of all foreign missionaries in 1630.

During the 1700s a period known as the Era of the Princes began. This period was characterized by a succession of local rulers who competed for the crown. There was a lack of centralized power during this period and the instability led to the fracturing of Ethiopia into regional states (Ethiopian History, 2012). The Era of the Princes came to an end when a brigand named Kassa Haylu had himself crowned Emperor Theodore II in 1855 by gaining the support of high ranking officials in the Ethiopian Church and defeating rival warlords controlling other parts of Ethiopia. The Emperor began modernizing and centralizing the legal and administrative systems of Ethiopia, a process that continued under the rule of the following Emperor, Johannes

IV. Both Theodore II and Johannes IV were opposed by local elements because of their attempts to centralize the government and both died fighting foreign powers interested in Ethiopia (Theodore died fighting the British in 1868 and Johannes was killed by the Sudanese in 1889).

Johannes IV was succeeded by Menelik II, who expanded Ethiopian territory and defended the country against the Italians, who had designs on colonizing the nation (Ethiopian History, 2012). Ethiopia's defeat of the Italians in 1896 was the first defeat of a European army at the hands of an African one. After Menelik died in 1913 he was succeeded by Lij Iyassu, who was deposed three years later for having strong sympathies for Muslims. Iyassu was replaced by Menelik's daughter, Empress Zauditu, who ruled until her death in 1930. Tafari Makonnen succeeded the Empress, becoming Emperor Haile Selassie (meaning "The power of the Trinity" in Amharic).

At the beginning of Selassie's reign, Ethiopia joined the League of Nations and wrote its first Constitution (Ethiopian History, 2012). Italian interest in Ethiopia was revived under Mussolini and Italy invaded the country in 1935. Haile Selassie went to into exile in 1936 and did not return until Ethiopian and British troops defeated the Italians in 1941. After World War II Emperor Selassie continued to try to modernize the country, which included the region of Eritrea (even though there was a strong Eritrean separatist movement). He survived a coup attempt in 1960 and went to war with Somalia over a border dispute four years later. Tensions between Eritrean separatists and the Ethiopian government persisted during this period and by 1970 the government had placed much of Eritrea under a state of siege.

Selassie was very active in international affairs during his reign. For example, he mediated disputes between Tanzania and Uganda and between Senegal and Ghana and he was instrumental in the formation of the Organization of African Unity (Ethiopian History, 2012).

Many in Ethiopia did not feel he was doing enough to deal with domestic issues, which included increasing inequality in the distribution of wealth, unemployment, severe drought in parts of the country, government corruption and very high inflation. In 1974, a series of strikes began that culminated in the ousting of Selassie the same year by the military.

One of the coup leaders, Mengistu Haile Mariam, and a group known as the Derg (Provisional Military Administrative Council) began running the country in late 1974 (Ethiopian History, 2012). In 1975 they abolished the monarchy and instituted a strict state controlled socialist economy. While many saw this as an opportunity for more democratic representation and reform, Mengistu began co-opting rivals and eliminating those he could not control. Several opposition parties formed guerilla armies and began campaigns against the government (referred to as the White Terror), which responded with its Red Terror. Several of the opposition parties had successes against the Mengistu regime, but were forced underground after Cuba and the Soviet Union came to Mengistu's aid. The US severed ties with Ethiopia in 1977 due to human rights violations (it is estimated that 100,000 people suspected of being enemies of the state were killed during 1977).

In 1987 a new constitution was written making Ethiopia a Marxist-Leninist Republic and a system of government was put in place modeled on the USSR (Ethiopian History, 2012). Many of the guerillas pushed underground in the 70s did not recognize the state and reemerged to challenge it. This campaign was very successful, especially once the Soviets withdrew their support for the regime at the end of the decade. By 1991, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) had completely encircled Addis Ababa and its ally, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) had defeated all government forces there. Meles Zenawi established a national transitional government in Addis, while a provisional government was put

in place by the EPLF in Eritrea. A referendum was held in 1993 in which Eritreans decided to form an independent nation.

By the end of 1995, a new Constitution had been put in place, Ethiopians had elected a legislature and Meles Zenawi had been named as Prime Minister, a position he served in until his death in 2012 (Ethiopia Profile, 2012). The EPRDF has remained in power since the defeat of the Derg, though this has been through democratic elections. While more democratic and open than Mengistu's regime, the post-Derg Ethiopian government has been accused of abuses such as political repression and curbing of freedom of the press.

Brehane: Lacking Faith in the Future

"Once someone leaves his own country and goes to another, whatever they give you, you shouldn't be choosy. Whatever you've been given, you should accept. This is not my country; this is not what I did."

Description

Brehane is a stocky Ethiopian man in his mid-fifties. Although usually not very talkative, he is always very polite and willing to engage in some form of small talk. He also has a grandfatherly characteristic about him, offering encouraging words to and giving advice to members of the center's staff about topics as varied as the types of courses the center should add to the best place one should go for Ethiopian food.

Brehane has been in Israel since 1996, when he arrived as a tourist, and has not left since then. Although single when he first came, Brehane met an Ethiopian woman named Sarah, whom he married several years later. The couple live in an apartment in South Tel Aviv and have no children. They are Roman Catholic, though Brehane does not believe that making religious distinctions is very important. "My religion is Christian, Catholic, but actually I do not segregate. Everyone has their own beliefs. Catholics are much more liberal, you see. That doesn't interfere with other religions. I grew up in Catholic schools, singing, etc."

Brehane works as a security guard, work that he has been doing 13 years without a promotion. Though he is happy to be working, he wishes he could advance in his job or obtain a different position. He believes that it is his conditional visa that is responsible for being continually passed over at work.

Brehane was in the most advanced Hebrew course at the center, but recently entered a Hebrew Ulpan through a cooperative agreement with the center. He is able to speak Hebrew

very fluidly, but hopes to improve his reading ability as well as his vocabulary. Although he would like to leave Israel, he does not have much hope that this is possible and so continues his Hebrew studies in case he remains in Israel for the rest of his life.

Reasons for Going to Israel

Brehane does not claim that he was facing serious persecution when he left Ethiopia in 1996. He flew into Tel Aviv's airport and obtained a three-month tourist visa, the same type of visa he currently holds. Before he arrived, Brehane's expectations of Israel were largely influenced by what his family and community members believed about Israel.

> I thought Israel would be to me, as I said my Christian background, my mother, my family, they said Israel is a different country in the world. It is blessed and the people are blessed (laughs)…and honey and milk and you don't work much and people help you so much and something exaggerated. What I heard and what I've seen is a totally different picture.

Brehane saw Israel as a place where he could find spiritual peace and where he would feel welcomed. He thought he would be able to work, study and find a community he would fit into. After he arrived, he went to Herziliya thinking he could find all of these things. Being disappointed, he then moved to Tel Aviv, where he has stayed. One thing he likes about Tel Aviv that he could not find in Herzeliya is the racial diversity; in particular, he appreciates that Tel Aviv has many more Africans and is happy that he is able to socialize with members of the Ethiopian refugee community.

> My first place was in a part of Israel called Herzeliya. I stayed there for nearly a year. Then I moved from there to Tel Aviv for everything: I mean, to live and to work and for

> social things. For so many things, Tel Aviv is a much better city. It is a colored town, so it is a much better city. So I moved to Tel Aviv.

Brehane never intended to stay in Israel permanently, but has had trouble leaving the country. If he leaves Israel, he knows he will not be allowed to return but he has not been able to find another country willing to accept him.

> Yeah, my plan was actually not to stay in Israel. I want to move to somewhere else but things are not arranged the way I expected. There are so many things (involved with going to another country) and different problems. First I stayed, not willingly, but so there is no choice so I stayed.

Language

Brehane has spent his entire life living in multilingual environments. In Ethiopia, he spoke Amharic for most things, while the medium of instruction in school was English. He also spoke some of his tribal language, Cambatinya.

> [In Ethiopia] we have the official language, Amharic, which is common. There are 180 tribes and 150 languages used for communication. I am poor to speak my tribal language because I grew up in the capital. I am from the southern part of Ethiopia. I did not speak my tribe's language well because of the lack of communication [after moving to Addis]. You see, [to maintain] any language you have to speak all the time, so for a long time I didn't speak it. I grew up in Addis, so for a long time I didn't speak it. But it doesn't take me long once I return to Ethiopia; if I speak it on a daily basis, it will return.

In Israel, Brehane uses Amharic at home with his wife and with his Ethiopian friends. Over the years, the number of Ethiopians seeking asylum in Israel has declined and as a result Brehane has had fewer people in his community to speak with. After Amharic, Hebrew is the

language Brehane uses most in Israel. He uses the language in everyday interactions with people and at his job. He does not consider himself fluent, but he is able to communicate with most people and does not have difficulties accomplishing regular tasks such as shopping, paying bills and conversing with Israelis.

Brehane's primary goal in studying Hebrew is to improve his reading and writing abilities. While he can speak to people, he is not able to read a newspaper nor can he understand many signs. This has made his life more difficult and, as he is not sure of whether he will ever leave Israel, this is a problem he wants to correct. A secondary objective of his Hebrew studies is improving his vocabulary. As his Hebrew has gotten better, he has become more aware of the anti-African sentiment in the country and he believes that by improving his vocabulary he will be able to recognize and understand even more Israeli prejudice. Brehane's current perspective developed over time; he originally believed that learning Hebrew would help him to fit in better in Israeli society.

> I thought that it would be okay most of the time with people in my work and everywhere I go, I mean, as long as I speak the language, not perfectly, but to communicate. But when I came to some point, I examined them. I got them and I saw so many hateful things against Africans. The color, they don't like the color.

Education

When Brehane first came to Israel he had hopes that he would be able to continue his studies. He did not have a specific subject in mind at the time and now has given up hope that he will ever go to university in Israel. Now that he is much older, he also does not want to spend many more years in school pursuing a degree. He would be happy, however, if he were given the opportunity to receive training through his work and could advance that way.

Work

Brehane does not mind his job as a security guard. He is not happy that his hours fluctuate and he sometimes needs to work overnight, but the work is not very difficult. Working as a security guard for 14 years has become monotonous, though, and Brehane wishes he could do something else. The problem with acquiring a better job in Israel is Brehane's conditional visa. Not only does the visa prevent him from finding better employment in a different field (most Africans with the same visa do manual or domestic labor, which is much more difficult and not well-paying), but it has led to Brehane being passed over in his current profession. It upsets Brehane that many of those who became security guards after him were given access to additional training and education and have even been promoted to managerial positions simply because they have the proper ID. He and the other Africans working as security guards will never have the same opportunities regardless of how hard or well they work.

> I am working as a security guard. It is not - it is temporary because I don't have Israeli citizenship. They always send staff for training and stuff like that. They select people, someone who has got their Israeli ID and stuff like that. So if you don't have the right status it is a problem.

Brehane does not have any problems with his coworkers. He speaks Hebrew well enough to communicate with his Israeli coworkers and his boss and people are polite. Although Brehane is polite to his coworkers, he does not feel close to them nor do his relationships extend outside of the workplace. When he first came to Israel, he thought that this was due to his lack of Hebrew. As his Hebrew has improved, however, Brehane's work relationships have not become any more intimate. He believes that this, in part, is due to his race. Brehane is proud of

his race and does not want to apologize for it; on his part, he is willing to be friends with anyone, regardless of their race or background.

> I am proud of being Black. I like being Black, really. Why I am Black? Why do I like this color? Just because I am Black I don't want to make [problems] or segregate. I am Black and I don't like a Red or Green person? No. The Black color came to me, I am Ethiopian. How I got it? History and nature. I am proud of my black color.

Culture

Brehane makes a distinction between Ethiopian Jews, who he believes have a claim to Israel, and Ethiopian refugees, whose situation is similar to that of other Africans in Israel.

> There was much bigger Ethiopian refugee community here. There are many Ethiopian communities, but there are different communities. There are two, the Ethiopian Israelis and the Ethiopians. Most of the people, when they come from the outside until they get in, they don't know. They say the Ethiopian community. Which one? Ethiopian Jews and Ethiopian other ones. Ethiopian refugees or Ethiopians they came for a purpose, for the church or some missions or something like that. Actually, we (non-Jewish Ethiopians) have been a big number. There have been many Ethiopians in the last six or seven years, but now that is changing. People are moving because of the harassment. Most of the Ethiopians [refugees] have been arrested and they left the country on their own and have gone to another country.

Brehane has no connection with the Ethiopian Jewish community and knows little about their situation in Israel, but he does believe that it is better than that of the Ethiopian refugees. Unlike the Ethiopian Jews, most Ethiopians believed that Israel was a holy Christian country

which was the primary reason many of them sought asylum there. After arriving, they found that not only was Israel not a Christian country, but that did Israelis not like Christians.

> I heard that totally everything it is different even to my Christian beliefs. I mean, as a Christian, we-most Ethiopians except the Ethiopian Jews-we thought that Israel was a Christian country; its not. It's different than Christian we see. Most of the people when they arrive they wear their cross on their necks and then after a week they start hiding the cross because it doesn't go in Israel. The people they look at us in different ways; some people don't want to attack you directly, but they want to attack you indirectly, like in a hidden way. The second thing is that even the people are aggressive and there is a hidden hate also.

Brehane admits that he does not have Israeli friends. While he is friendly with the people he works with, those relationships are not deep. To Brehane, the primary reason for this is that he is not Jewish. He believes that Israelis care primarily about Jews and even though they may be nice to others on the surface, there is no room for close relationships with non-Jews.

> Israelis are very sensitive to their interests. They look ok, but when you go much closer you really know who they are. You only see the upper part (the surface) from the outside, you think they are open, but I know they are not. When you get inside they are really interested in their religion. If someone is a Jew they get the first place. If someone is not a Jew, there is not a space for them.

While religion is one factor that creates a distance between Africans and Israelis, Brehane believes that race is the source of more prejudice. Brehane observes anti-Black racism primarily in the standoffish behavior of individuals and the words they use. This bothers Brehane because he feels that race is not something one chooses; instead, God is responsible for the different races

and one's race does not make one bad or good. While the racism bothers Brehane, he is happy that, so far, violence has not been used against him. "They [Israelis] didn't come to hurt me or things like that, but they segregate themselves and you see they have got the words. Maybe someone is Black and they say negro and things like that. Here they say kushi."

Brehane does not believe that all Israelis hate Africans. "I think there are exceptions: university students, teachers, others. There are really good people; there are people that even fight against such things (discrimination)." While he admits that some Israelis are good, recent protests and spates of violence have him worried about remaining in Israel.

> The segregation and things like that, things like what happened a couple of days ago [anti-African protests and an Eritrean store was vandalized]…of course I think about where I am. It scares me and it changed me totally. I am thinking, "What will happen to me tomorrow? What will I do? What is my protection? What's the next step?" I am not a different person [than other African refugees]. I am like a refugee, so that is my thought.

The State

Brehane does not feel comfortable criticizing Israel, as he feels it is not his place to criticize the country that is providing him refuge. That said, he is ambivalent in his views of Israel. As a Christian the country has a special place in his heart and he values many of the holy sites and churches he has seen in the country. At the same time, he is bothered by the lack of attention given to refugees in the country. Brehane is particularly disappointed because he sees Israel as a country that, like many other countries, signed agreements committing to supporting refugees and other groups in need.

> Israel looks to me different from any western country regarding to the refugee situation. Maybe you have been in Israel and you may have some background so Israel is a country. As a Christian, I mean, I love the country. There is no problem with the other side [the religious side], but as long as I am a refugee in Israel my status is…I don't know. I have been here 10 years and I am still waiting. I mean, I still have to request six-month temporary visas. In Israel, somebody who has been here for 12 years and the person who arrives here yesterday [have the same status]. I think they have got their own way and they are not doing things according to conviction. Israel has signed a general convention, but Israel does not apply it. So it is not a country that we can say that regards the refugee situation, I mean, where the fulfillment [of the convention] is respected.

Brehane views Israel's unwillingness to recognize and provide support to refugees as a violation of human rights. To Brehane, there should be a level of respect accorded to all people regardless of their citizenship or religion.

> The thing I hate the most is the lack of respect for human beings and that there is no interest in somebody if the person is not a citizen or doesn't belong to there. They don't treat us as people. Like the first lesson [the golden rule], things like that, so even myself, I am a refugee. So even after how many years they don't consider that this person has got the rights or the status; they don't care. They don't mind us. These things I hate.

If I get access I prefer to go to another count here I am like a prisoner they don't allow me to go to another country to visit my friends to see my family but they don't allow me. If I get a chance I to go to another country I would be very happy.

Reflection

Perhaps it is because he is older than the other participants and has been in Israel longer, but Brehane seems very tired. He talks about wanting to leave Israel, but I don't get the sense that he truly believes this will happen anymore. While he has problems with Israeli society, he has managed to find a community that he is comfortable in and a stable job. He admitted to me that he feels that many of the opportunities he once saw for himself have passed by because he has spent so long in Israel and he has no serious connections in other countries. Perhaps he has resigned himself to being segregated from Israeli society?

Map of Eritrea

(CIA, 1983)

Eritrea Country History

Eritrea has a population of less than 6 million people (Eritrea, 2010). The country occupies an area of 45,300 sq miles, approximately the size of the state of Ohio (Eritrea, 2010; Ipl2, 2011). Eritrea shares a northwestern border with Sudan, a southern border with both Ethiopia and Djibouti, and the Red Sea lies to its east)

Eritrea was an Italian colony that was occupied by the British in 1941 (Eritrea Country Profile, 2010). It was established as an autonomous region by the UN in 1952, although it had formerly been a part of the kingdom of Ethiopia. In 1962, Ethiopia annexed Eritrea, starting a war that lasted 32 years (Eritrea Timeline, 2010). Eritrea gained independence in 1994, after a referendum in which Eritreans unanimously voted to secede (Eritrea Country Profile, 2010). War broke out between Ethiopia and Eritrea again in 1998 in response to outstanding border disputes. This ended in 2000, resulting in tens of thousands of soldiers dead on both sides and an estimated 32,000 internally displaced people (Eritrea, 2010). Relations between the countries remain tense.

Perhaps as a result of its war-filled history, Eritrea maintains a very large military (Eritrea, 2010). Technically, there is a 16-month military service requirement for all Eritreans between the ages of 18-40, but the UN accuses the government of extending national service indefinitely (Immigration Refugee Board of Canada, 2007). The BBC argues that the large number of Eritreans forced to serve in the military has actually hurt Eritrea's economy as these individuals could be in the labor force (Eritrea Country Profile, 2010).

Eritrea's military situation has also garnered it condemnation for breaching human rights (Eritrea, 2010). It is accused of being complicit in the conscription of children into military service. Also, a number of religious minorities (such as Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses and Bahai's) are not allowed to practice their religions in country, and have been subject to beatings and imprisonment by Eritrean authorities; while religious discrimination is due to a variety of factors, at least part of the justification given for restricting the rights of religious minorities is their conscientious objection to military service (Eritrea, 2010; Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 2010).

Eritrea is currently under a transitional government. The government is made up entirely of members of the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), the only recognized party in the country (Eritrea, 2010). Originally established in 1993, the role of the legislature was to draft a constitution and preside until presidential and parliamentary elections in 2001; these were postponed indefinitely and have yet to occur.

In addition to its dispute with Ethiopia, Eritrea has difficult relations with several other countries. Sudan accuses Eritrea of supporting eastern Sudanese rebel groups (Eritrea, 2010). Eritrean troops also invaded the Yemeni-held Hanish islands in 1995, a dispute that was also mediated by the UN (Eritrea Country Profile, 2010; Eritrea Timeline, 2010). The UN imposed sanctions on the country in 2009, accusing it of supporting anti-Ethiopian Islamist insurgents in Somalia (Eritrea Country Profile, 2010).

The US also alleges that Eritrea is complicit in the trafficking of men, women and children for forced domestic labor and commercial sex exploitation because it does not adhere to the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, a set of standards the US has employed since 2000 to evaluate the efforts nations are taking to eliminate human trafficking (Eritrea, 2010; Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, 2000). Due to the extreme poverty of Eritrea and lack of work prospects, many Eritreans leave the country illegally for Sudan, Ethiopia, and Kenya, where many are exploited due their legal status (Eritrea, 2010). Many others migrate to the Gulf, where they often become victims of forced labor or sexual exploitation.

John: Searching for a New Home

"I have passed through all of life's difficulties."

Description

It is John's eyes that are most striking, seeming much older and wiser than one would expect of a 32-year-old. He has a thin, small frame and his default expression is a blank one. Although the past few years have been very difficult for John, one would not know it by talking to him. He is very friendly, though somewhat quiet, and can appreciate a joke.

John has been in Israel for a little over a year and in that time has made greater strides in learning Hebrew than most of the refugees visiting the refugee center. His teacher comments that he is her most focused and accomplished student; she is particularly impressed with his attendance record, which is stellar compared to most of her Hebrew students. John's desire to learn Hebrew seems a bit odd, as he is a fluent English speaker and he lives in the Schuhuna Tikva neighborhood where his native Tigrinya is spoken more than Israel's official language. John has so many friends and acquaintances from Eritrea, he jokes, that it would take him more than a day to count them all.

John is single and lives with several friends from Eritrea. He works in a clothing store, where he cleans and helps to maintain the goods. Between his job and language classes, John does not have time for much else.

Reasons for Going to Israel

John is vague about the specific circumstances that led him to flee Eritrea, but does cite his safety and a desire to gain more education as the primary factors. These stem from the lack of political freedom in Eritrea.

> Why I left my country is a long story. If I have to answer in a few words, I came to Israel to save my life and to get a better opportunity for studying, especially education. It is known the situation in Eritrea. You can judge the activity of the government. There is no democracy in general. The government has been around about 20 years. It was about 20 years without having a transition, without having an election. So this idea can be gotten easily from the people who are living out of the country. If you get in detail into the activities of the government it is even worse. We have seen that there is no election so the government doesn't belong to the people.

He first went to Sudan and stayed there for seven months. Seeing that life was very difficult there and that he and many of the people he traveled with could not find work, they decided they would move to Libya. In Libya life was worse for John than it had been in either Eritrea or Sudan. He spent 17 months in the country, 14 of which were spent being tortured in Libyan prisons for reasons that still remain a mystery to John.

> There is no reason (for our being tortured). No reason. It is more satisfying when you have a reason to be imprisoned but without any reason you can't tolerate it. You ask yourself "Why am I here? Why are they beating me? Why are they treating me that harsh?" You ask yourself, but you don't get an answer. And then finally at the end they told us that they were to deport us to my homeland. Then they took us to the last state of deportation, the last state [a prison] is very near to the airport and it is underground. Those who go into this prison have never come back.

Instead of being deported, he and about 200 others were released into the town closest to the prison. They were told that if they left the town they would be imprisoned again, yet they were not allowed to work nor did the people in the town want them there. After living on the

streets with almost no food or water for several days, they decided they had to escape. They were able to bribe a Libyan to sneak them out of town, but only a few people at a time. John was among the last to try to escape and ended up being caught.

> So if you are the last person who is getting out of the city it is very harsh. When I was going in this way [trying to escape] a gate keeper or police caught us. They told the driver that he should take us back to the place [where they had been staying] and then the driver took us to the place. You couldn't live there; there was not any chance [to survive], you have to keep trying to escape. At last I succeeded. Also, I have been caught and then even though I tried to escape on foot they were coming by car, they are following me using a car. They caught me by their hands and then there was beating. You understand that if you try to catch a rabbit, when you catch it you have to hit it. They have a religious issue. If you are not similar to their religions it is dangerous for you. There was a cross with me and then they saw it. All are Muslim and then they asked me [my religion]. I told them the truth, that I am a Christian. The beatings were worse. They used these electrical sticks and so on. Anyway, by hook or crook we got into the city and then there was no will to live there, so by hook or crook we had to leave the country and then I came here.

His experiences in Libya and Sudan told John that he would not be safe in a Muslim country and he decided he would have to go somewhere else. Once out of Libya, he went to Cairo and was immediately able to arrange to have Bedouins transport him and several others to the Israeli border. About half of those he traveled with survived the trip to the border and once they crossed over, they were apprehended by the border patrol. They were taken to a jail where

they were held for four months, after which they were taken to a bus station in Tel Aviv and left to fend for themselves.

> When we first arrived in Israel we felt that it is a new thing. There is no language, we don't know Hebrew. We can't read anything; it is all written in the Hebrew language. And you have so many questions, but they are just for yourself. Where shall I go, what shall I eat, where shall I sleep?

Language

John's native language is Tigrinya. He is also a high level English speaker, knows some Arabic and is currently studying Hebrew. He learned English while in school in Eritrea, where both his secondary and tertiary education was taught in the language. He picked up Arabic while in Sudan and Libya, where it was the lingua franca. While John is able to function with his currently level of language proficiency, he is committed to becoming fluent in Hebrew. He sees learning a language as the key to communication and understanding and he feels that language learning is the obligation of anyone who immigrates to a new society.

> If you know two types of languages you are in the presence of two people. If you know more languages you are in the presence of more people. Language is the basic necessity in order for you to communicate with people. You have to study their language. It is key to solving any problem concerning with your life. If you are in a strange country, if that country is different from your own, then you have to learn their language in order to get everything. To get familiar with them, to be efficient in the work you have, to understand them easily; you have to know the things which are available. As I believe that language is the key to everything, I am taking the key to open the life.

While John is enjoying his lessons, he does not feel that they have helped him to understand Israeli culture or society. Culture can only be learned through interactions with Israelis and having experiences in society. One should learn about Israeli weddings by attending one, not by being told about them or reading about them in a book. While John hasn't learned much about Israelis in school, his language lessons have helped him both at work and in interacting with Israelis in public.

> I used to make lists in English at work, but maybe two weeks ago I was given the verb to arrange clothes (lesader). Then I made the list in Hebrew, I presented my work to the manager and then he read it in Hebrew. He was expecting that I would give it to him in English, but I gave it to him in Hebrew. Definitely he was surprised and he felt something more [for me].

John is ambitious in his language goals. While currently in an upper level beginner class, he is confident that he can become fluent in Hebrew by the end of the year. His commitment to learning Hebrew is bittersweet, however. He originally wanted to learn it because he thought that Israel would be his new home, but now worries that the government will never grant him the rights he had hoped he would get by leaving Eritrea.

Education

While John values education very highly and cites it as one of the reasons why he left Eritrea, there is no specific subject that he is interested in studying. He completed a technical degree in carpentry in Eritrea and is more interested in working in his chosen profession than studying more. He does value language education, as it is necessary for communicating with Israelis and can help him better fit into society.

> Israel is the place of opportunity for me, which means I really am very interested in education and I expected to get an educational opportunity. And when you volunteer to move to one country or when you leave your original home, there should be something that provides the basic things: food, water and shelter. This is really necessary; this is very basic and necessary.

John believes that many Africans who have come to Israel do not take educational courses. They choose not to study because their time is consumed with work. They must work in order to survive in Israel, but also because that is the culture of the country and everyone works long hours. To John, this partially explains why organizations such as the ARDC do not have full classrooms and why few Africans speak Hebrew well. He also thinks that organizations such as ARDC might also share some of the blame, as students may not make the progress or see the results they expected from such courses.

> The people who are living here in Israel from abroad may not be interested in the courses of the organization. I think everyone has to work and is concerned with work only. Also, there is a reason that it makes them to be interested in work; it is the life of the country. It has forced them to think only about work. This organization may not be satisfied by the amount of refugees that are participating. As well, those who are participating [in language classes], they may not get their goal or their wishes; maybe this is some fault of the organization.

Work

John is happy to be working, but does not like that he is unable to work in his field. In Eritrea he had not only been able to make and repair furniture, but he had obtained the experience and qualifications to teach others. In his current position he is only able to sell

clothes and clean the shop, which is perhaps the most technical position he will ever be allowed to hold in Israel. John's frustrations with the state of affairs has led him to seriously consider leaving Israel.

> Here at this time I can say I mostly I prefer to leave from this country. [It is] because I have been here for over one year, I have seen what is [available] here and I tried to get my wish [to do skilled work], but I couldn't get it. Not only didn't I get it, but it is also written [on John's visa] that I can't work. So it is reasonable that I go to another country where I can get my wish.

Although John has issues with doing unskilled labor, he likes and appreciates his boss and coworkers. Besides the boss, everyone in the shop is an immigrant. Most of his coworkers are Russian and they communicate with him in a mixture of Hebrew and English. His boss speaks English well, but prefers Hebrew. Given that English is a foreign language to everyone at the store, Hebrew is used as the primary lingua franca.

> When it is comfortable to speak Hebrew I use it and if we are in a hurry, I have to speak English for those who speak English. For those who don't speak English I have no choice, I have to speak Hebrew.

John speaks very fondly of his coworkers, who he considers friends. They talk regularly throughout the workday and help each other out. No one is mean to him, nor do they feel any prejudice against him because he is African. While he likes his coworkers, John concedes that there is a professional distance between them. He doesn't know about their families or life situations and they do not know about his. They have never spent time together outside of work and John feels unwilling to reach out in this manner until someone has reached out to him first.

> No, I didn't see such kind of behavior from them [fraternizing outside of work], so I can't take that action. We are nice to each other [at work], but keep our distance. Yes. We meet concerning work and inside work there is a nice relationship, not an individual relationship. It is a workman relationship.

Culture

John believes that every society has good people and bad people, but he admits that he has never had a negative interaction with an Israeli since he arrived. Even when he spent several months in the detention facility, waiting to be processed, the people who worked there were always friendly. While John has not had any difficulties with Israelis, he does not have many close Israeli friends. He counts the people he works with as friends, but he keeps them at a professional distance. He considers an Israeli reporter, who once wrote an article about him, as a good friend. They meet or talk on the phone every couple of weeks and primarily discuss life and how each of them is doing.

John attributes the lack of closeness he has with Israelis to the nature of Israeli society. In Eritrea, relationships and social interaction were a large part of everyday life. Not only were John's friends and family members always welcome in his home, but so was anyone from his community. In Israel, John barely knows his neighbors and none have been to his home. Instead of family and relationships being at the core of Israeli society, John believes that one's work is what consumes most of one's time and energy.

> Now, I think the situation is just, from your home to your work, from your work to your home. I think Israeli life is like this. I don't know exactly why, but there is my contact with neighbor who is with surrounded by people and I think this is the exact situation.

Besides the emphasis on work, John does not know much about Israeli culture. His coworkers do not discuss it, nor is culture a part of his Hebrew lessons. John also confesses that he does not participate in any activities or in organizations that have Israeli participation. Still, he believes that understanding the host country's culture is very important for any immigrant.

> Yeah, if you don't know the culture, it is not good. [If you don't know] the culture of the people, you can make a mistake. [If you do know the culture] you will have a currency with the people. If there are they are traditional and [you disrespect the culture] then it would not be good for you and it will not be good for the people as well, so you have to keep the culture. When you are in Israel you have to be like an Israeli. You have to respect Israel, their tradition and their culture and then, on the way, you will introduce your culture. You will introduce your tradition for them, also, so that they will know how you were living in your country and then they will keep your tradition as well as your culture. This means that you are becoming very close together so that your life is easier.

The State

Much of the frustration John feels is directed at the State of Israel and its policies. While he believes that Israelis are kind and he respects Israeli culture, it is the laws that are in place that prevent him from succeeding in Israel. John places a high premium on having access to education and being able to work, but feels that the state has done little to provide even the most basic supports for asylum seekers.

> Israel was the place of opportunity for me, which means I was really very interested in education and so I expected to get an educational opportunity. And when you leave your original home, it means there should be something that provides the basic things: food,

> water and shelter. This is really very basic and necessary. So when it came to [Israel], when you have been sent out from the [detention] center, they left you in the tachana merkazit (central bus station) so you don't know where to go.

Instead of providing support to those seeking refuge, the Israeli government has taken a blind eye to their plight. In this environment, asylum seekers do what is necessary to survive. For John and many others, this meant depending heavily on social connections from the country of origin and taking low wage unskilled employment illegally.

> So there is no choice: if nobody provides a space for you, you have to try to provide a space for yourself. This is the situation. So we get friends that have to receive us and keep us with them for a while. Then, after a time, we can start working and then find a place of our own. This is the key to the situation when we come here, but we struggle very much and in the end I wish the government would provide us the very basic necessities and then to teach us the language. [Also, the government should] provide work so that we can start getting a life. This is the expectation and also it is true that it is practically working all over the world for refugees. So, as Israel is a part of the world, I have to expect that it is done [here]. So the situation here was not as I expected; it is the opposite.

For John the solution is simple. Change the conditional visa's conditions so that asylum seekers are treated as equals. Israelis are able to go to school, they can receive health services and they can work in professions for which they are qualified. John did not come to Israel to feed off of the state; instead, he was searching for a new country to call home and, like any citizen, he wanted to contribute to making his new home better.

> So, I mean that there is no such kind of [conditional release] visa for every Israeli. I need to be as equal as the same people. I came here to be an Israeli. I am Eritrean, but I came to Israel to live for all my life. This means I have to be a part of Israel, not a slave of Israel. If so, I have to get citizenship and then it is okay.

Reflection

John strikes me as the most relaxed of all of the participants. I truly believe that nothing he faces in Israel compares to the difficulties he had being tortured in Libya or barely surviving in Sudan. Still, his seeming lack of emotion makes it difficult for me to see what he is truly passionate about. Although he says that he wants to move to another country, he does seem pretty content with his life in Tel Aviv. While he is not excited about his work, he seems to have many friends in the Eritrean community and he also has contacts in the Israeli community. He is also making better progress with his Hebrew than most students in the language program.

Chapter 9

Cross-Case Analysis, Theoretical Reflections and Conclusions

This chapter details the results of my study. It is organized into four sections. The first section (Cross-case Analysis) compiles the findings of the participant profiles across participants and uses this information to make more general connections. The section is divided according to the themes I used in Chapter 4 for the participant profiles. The second section (Examination of Berry's Model) examines the findings with respect to Berry's Acculturation Theory, while the third section (Examination of Ogbu's Theory) examines the findings with respect to Ogbu's Theory. The final section (Conclusion) explains how this research can be used to help policy makers or educators, discusses some of the issues that were missed in this study and suggests areas for future research in this field.

Cross-Case Analysis

Reasons for Going to Israel – "Push" Factors or "Pull" Factors?

A popular theory of migration argues that individuals migrate to a new location primarily due to either 'push' factors or 'pull' factors (Kerri, 1976; Kontuly et al, 1995). The difference between these factors is that individuals who are primarily motivated by push factors migrate because of dissatisfaction with their place of origin, while individuals primarily influenced by pull factors choose to move because of the perceived benefits associated with their destination. Examples of push factors include the inability to find work, high crime rates and severe weather patterns. Examples of pull factors include good job prospects, educational opportunities and a low cost of living. One concern with the notion of push and pull is that they appear to be two sides of the same coin; if one is 'pushed' from her homeland by the inability to find work, isn't

she therefore 'pulled' to her place of immigration by the ability to find work? There isn't a firm answer to this question, but research suggests that one type of factor (push or pull) is takes precedence in the case of the immigrant (Kerri, 1976).

As I considered my findings, I found that making the distinction between push factors and pull factors was useful. Although the concept of refugee implies that push factors (such as the fear for one's safety) are primary causes of migration, I found that my participants differed with respect to whether push or pull factors were more important in the decision to immigrate. Using this theory may help to identify which factors are more prevalent to those who are pushed from home rather than pulled to Israel (and vice versa) as well as discover how each type of factor may influence patterns of adaptation. While I believe the push/pull distinction is useful, it is important to note that the reasons why an individual chooses to immigrate may be varied and that both pull and push factors may be involved. Even if an individual chooses to immigrate due to fear of persecution, they may also view the country of destination as more desirable because of opportunities for economic or educational advancement. In the same vein, an individual who seeks better economic opportunities in another country could also be unhappy with the violence or lack of political freedom in their country of origin. Also, although I do believe that some of my participants came to Israel primarily due to pull factors, I am not making a claim as to whether or not they should be considered refugees; one can have a well-founded fear of persecution in a country, but choose to leave primarily due to economic considerations.

Of the participants I would classify four as being more heavily influenced by push factors. Amina, Ibrahim, Joe and John left their countries of origin out of fear for their lives. For Amina, Joe and John, they mentioned detention, torture and threats by government forces as reasons for their leaving. Ibrahim attributed his flight to the threats being made by individuals of

different ethnic groups/political parties. In the case of all of the 'push' participants, Israel was not their intended country of immigration. Amina had wanted to remain in Egypt until it was safe for her to return to Sudan. Both John and Ibrahim traveled throughout North Africa, hoping to find safety and stability, before giving up on this and deciding to head to Israel. Although Joe came directly to Israel, he had originally thought that he would be given permission to go to Europe.

For those more influenced by push factors, it is important to consider why they eventually came to Israel instead of another country. Amina came to Israel because her family did not think she or they would be safe if she stayed in Sudan or Egypt and she had unintentionally married a man living in Israel. Joe had hoped to go to Europe, but was only given a week to vacate Sudan; given the other countries he could get to from Sudan, he believed Israel would be the best option because of the Jewish history of genocide. John traveled first to North Africa and, after almost starving and being tortured in Libya, decided that Israel might be the only place he would survive in the region. Ibrahim also traveled first to North Africa, but found that he was not welcome as a black African in the countries he went to.

Of these participants, Amina was the only one who had no interest in coming to Israel; family pressures seemed to be the primary factor in her decision. Each of the rest decided that Israel was their best option for survival in the Middle East region. As Amina did not freely choose to go to Israel, I expected her to have very negative feelings towards the country and to be unlikely to associate with Israeli culture. While Amina did have negative feelings towards Israel and a mistrust of Israelis (in general), she did not strike me as more resistant to Israeli culture than Joe or Brehane. One difference between Amina and the other two, however, is that she arrived in Israel with stronger connections to the Israeli community (her husband had been

taken in by an Israeli family, they interacted socially with her husband's coworkers, her husband speaks Hebrew) and yet she did not have any interest in learning Hebrew or developing close friendships with Israelis. Perhaps, then, her reticence to come to the country did play a major part in her lack of desire to participate more fully in Israeli society.

The rest of the participants, Brehane, Rebecca, Rafik and Lamin, were more influenced by the pull of factors in their country of destination. Rebecca left Nigeria because her life there had been very stressful and difficult and she believed that living in Israel would bring her happiness while Brehane was hoping to find a new life and community. Rafik cited both education and work as major reasons for leaving Sudan and Lamin originally left Liberia in the pursuit of education in Egypt. Lamin is unique among those primarily influenced by pull factors in that his first country of destination was not Israel. He first spent several years living and studying in Egypt and had the expectation that he would be resettled in the West. It was only after becoming disaffected by the resettlement process in Cairo that he moved his family to Israel.

My expectation was that those more influenced by pull factors would have more positive feelings towards Israeli society than those who did not originally plan to migrate to the country. While this may be true for new immigrants, evidence suggests that (for those who are pulled to a country) satisfaction with one's country of destination is dependent upon the ability to benefit from whatever factors drew one to the country (Kerri, 1976). Of the three participants (Brehane, Rebecca and Rafik) who explicitly chose Israel as their destination before leaving their home countries, only Rebecca seemed very happy with her experiences in Israel. Both she and Brehane said that their religious beliefs and communities gave them very positive images of Israel and that this led them to believe their lives would be easier in Israel than their home

countries. Although Rebecca and Brehane resemble each other in this respect, Brehane also believed that he would acquire educational and professional opportunities in Israel. After more than a decade in the country, the barriers to advancing professionally or pursuing additional educational opportunities have led Brehane to become disillusioned with those dreams. Rebecca, on the other hand, was not seeking educational or professional fulfillment when she went to Israel. She entered Israel as a professional (teacher) and saw the country as a place where she would find spiritual and psychological fulfillment. Rebecca has been able to find a religious community in Israel and is also removed from many of the stresses of her life in Nigeria; in addition, even though she is not able to work as a teacher, she makes more money as a cleaner than she did as a teacher in Nigeria.

Rafik is like Brehane in that he believed that he could find opportunity in Israel. Israel was the most advanced country he might reach from Sudan, one that would provide him with chances for education and/or work. He is not as disenfranchised as Brehane, which may be due to the fact that he has not lived in Israel as long; also, he has not made serious attempts to engage with Israelis or learn about Israeli culture, given that he has a very strong Darfuri community to rely on. Lamin is unique in that he migrated to and then left another country, Egypt, before deciding to go to Israel. His decision to leave was due to frustration with the UNHCR resettlement process and he believed that his family would be better off in Israel if he never received the opportunity to go to the USA or Europe. Living in Israel for several years, he has also become disaffected by the lack of work or educational options available to him. As Lamin has lived in more than one country, though, he recognizes that some things are better in Israel than they were in Egypt and he is much more selective about where he would be willing to

migrate in the future. To him, living in a Western, English-speaking country is his only chance at being successful.

While not a perfect indicator of how the participants have adapted, thinking in terms of push and pull factors has helped me to understand certain aspects of my participants' patterns of acculturation. For instance, it was interesting to note that all of those who left their countries of origin (Amina, Ibrahim, Joe and John) due to push factors did not originally intend or want to go to Israel. None of these individuals were happy with their lives in Israel and all hoped to be able to immigrate to another country. Of the participants who felt pulled to Israel (Brehane, Rebecca and Rafik) from their countries of origin, they left their countries of origin in the pursuit of educational, economic or spiritual betterment; it is interesting that of these participants, those seeking educational or economic opportunity were the least pleased with their lives in Israel while the person seeking spiritual fulfillment was happy. Lamin resembles members of the pulled group even though he was not in his country of origin. He also immigrated in the hopes of finding educational or economic opportunity and felt unhappy with not being able to find it.

Language

My early thinking about the role of language in the acculturation of refugees was that acquiring high levels of proficiency in Hebrew would offer my participants greater economic and professional opportunities in Israel, while English would be useful for those seeking to migrate elsewhere. I do not feel that this thinking was wrong, but I now believe I was overly optimistic about the role learning Hebrew would play in facilitating the upward social or economic mobility of Africans. From the economic standpoint, it is illegal for the overwhelming majority of African refugees in Israel to work and they are ineligible to attend publicly funded university programs. While Hebrew proficiency would allow for greater social access to Israelis, the fact

that most Africans live in predominantly migrant areas (where rent is cheaper and they are less likely to bothered by the police) and are also separated by class from most Israelis makes me skeptical of the role language could play in bridging the social divide. Also, although English is a global language, I have begun to question the value of choosing to study it given that the opportunities for migration are so low.

Using the aforementioned lens, it was very difficult to understand why my participants were studying English or Hebrew and how this might be influencing them. Pierce (1995) suggests that traditional theories of foreign language learning are flawed because they do not take into account both the language learner and the language learning context; most importantly, these theories "have not questioned how relations of power in the social world affect social interaction between second language learners and target language speakers" (p. 12). Perhaps one's decision to study a language and which language to study was related to the types of social interactions one expected to have in the language. This may have been lost on me because I had a major advantage as a native English speaker in Israel. Although I did take Hebrew lessons, I found that I really only needed to speak Hebrew when interacting with some migrants or Israelis who lacked high levels of education. None of my Israeli friends interacted with me in Hebrew and English served as the lingua franca between all of my non-Israeli friends. When I interacted with someone whose native language wasn't English and there was some confusion, invariably the person apologized to me for not being more fluent in English.

Considering my participants under this lens may explain much of the behavior I saw. For each of my participants, knowledge of Hebrew would have served them better functionally than English. For example, with the exception of Amina (who translates between Fur language or Arabic and English), all of the respondents expressed the need to use Hebrew for work. While

Brehane and Joe can function at work operating completely in Hebrew, the other participants reported switching between English and Hebrew to communicate with their employers. Rafik, in addition, uses Arabic to talk to one of his co-workers. Amina does not need Hebrew for work, but she interacts with her husband's work friends and adoptive family regularly, all of whom speak Hebrew.

The usefulness of Hebrew notwithstanding, all of the participants seemed to value English more than Hebrew. Of the participants, five are studying English. Three students, Amina, Ibrahim and Lamin, are studying English only. Amina and Ibrahim have only taken English while in Israel, while Lamin opted to drop Hebrew because he did not feel he could learn both languages simultaneously and believed English to be the more important language of the two. Although Amina, Ibrahim and Lamin have said that knowing Hebrew would make communication easier for them, each of them has decided either not to study Hebrew at all or to drop their Hebrew languages course to focus on English.

Rafik and Joe are studying both Hebrew and English. Rafik is participating in both Hebrew and English classes. Joe is taking Hebrew lessons, but also actively studying for the TOEFL exam on his own. Rafik has reduced the number of Hebrew classes he takes so that he might spend more time in English classes. Joe's English proficiency is higher than his Hebrew proficiency, but he chooses to spend more time practicing and studying English.

The remaining participants, Rebecca, Brehane and John, are studying Hebrew only. Each of these participants studied English formally in their countries of origin and have not taken any additional English courses in Israel. Of this group, all of them are already proficient English speakers.

Not only did participants choose to give precedence to studying English, they also used it in more in social interactions than Hebrew. Each of the participants reported using English on a regular basis. Amina was the only respondent whose job required English proficiency, but each of the others used English to communicate with coworkers and bosses as they could not fully communicate in Hebrew. Interestingly, each of the participants reported using English socially or among friends. Those with Israeli friends (Amina, Ibrahim, Rebecca and John) communicate with those friends completely in English. Two participants, Rebecca and Lamin, use English as the primary medium of communication at home, while three other participants (Rafik, Ibrahim and Joe) practice using English with those they live with even though they are able to communicate in other languages.

None of the participants reported using Hebrew amongst their friends or for social activities. Among those who said that they had an Israeli friend or socialized with Israelis regularly (Amina, Rebecca, Ibrahim and John), none used Hebrew as the language of communication (everyone uses English). Of these four participants, none of them had reached an intermediate or advanced level of communication. The two participants with the highest levels of spoken Hebrew proficiency, Brehane and Joe, reported that they did not interact with Israelis socially nor did they have Israeli friends. Instead, both felt that as their Hebrew has improved they have become more suspicious of Israelis and more aware of anti-African prejudice in society.

Taking Pierce's (1995) theory into consideration has helped me to explain these behaviors. Interacting with Israelis in Hebrew often puts the refugee at a disadvantage, especially if there is any conflict, as the refugee would not be as fluent in the language or knowledgeable of the culture as the native Hebrew speaker. English is not only considered a useful language in

Israel, but is also associated with one's level of education, ethnic origin and worldliness (Nadel et al, 1977). For my participants, being able to interact in English might put them on more equal footing with Israelis or even give them an advantage (if the Israeli was not very fluent in English). At the same time, knowledge of English might also give them greater access to the Western international community in Israel, which tends to be more sympathetic to Africans than mainstream Israeli society. This may explain why several of the participants practice their English among friends who speak the same native language. It may also explain why Rebecca found it easier to interact with the Israeli women she calls her friends. Among the two participants with the highest levels of Hebrew proficiency, Joe and Brehane, both view the acquisition of Hebrew language as something to be used against (or to protect against) Israelis. This goes along with Pierce's (1995) notion of power, and suggests that Hebrew language interactions between refugees and Israelis may not foster close relationships.

While the dynamics of Israeli-African social interactions may play a role my participants' language choices, it is important to note that none of my participants is linguistically or culturally isolated from others from their places of origin. This meant that although learning a foreign language was useful, each participant had access to social and cultural outlets that may have mediated the effects of moving to a new society. A prime indicator of this is that all of the participants reported living with at least one person speaking a language from their country of origin and no one was living with a non-African. Each of the Darfuris (Amina, Joe and Rafik) live with other Darfuris who also speak Fur language. Ibrahim lives with Mohammed, who speaks both French and Jula with Ibrahim. Brehane is married to another Ethiopian and they communicate in Amharic (she does not speak Cambatinya). Rebecca and Lamin come from countries where English is an official language and they communicate in that language at home.

John lives with other Eritreans and speaks with them in Tigrinya. In addition, each of the participants said that many of their friends speak the same home country languages as they do.

While attempting to understand the dynamics of power involved in learning and using foreign languages was useful in explaining my participants' behavior, I should point out that none of my participants justified their decisions in such terms. Many of the explanations given to explain their language choices are much more straightforward and also strike me as reasonable (English is more important as a global language, Hebrew is only useful in Israel, etc.). I do not believe accepting Pierce's theory negates or undermines the responses given by my participants; instead, I believe that theorizing serves only to enrich my understanding of the phenomenon.

Education

When I started my research project, I did not expect as much diversity in educational attainment as I observed amongst the refugees I interacted with in Tel Aviv. Although many, probably most, of the Africans I interacted with were primary or secondary school leavers, I also met many who had bachelors or masters degrees; also, a number of others had received technical or vocational training in their countries of origin. Before I arrived in Israel, I also expected that the overwhelming majority of African refugees would want to pursue higher levels of education; while I may never know what percentage of Africans in Israel want more educational opportunities, I was surprised that several of my participants did not express a desire for more academic training.

Three of the participants, John, Rebecca and Ibrahim, did not want to return to school for more advanced degrees or vocational education. Rebecca was the only one of these participants with a tertiary education, having completed a primary school teaching degree at a teacher's training college. John completed a vocational course in furniture/carpentry in Eritrea and spent

time as a carpentry teacher at a vocational school. Ibrahim did not complete secondary school, but was trained as a tailor. The remaining participants, Joe, Amina, Lamin, Rafik and Brehane wanted to pursue additional education. Of these, Amina was the only individual who had completed any tertiary or vocational education.

Although making the distinction between those wanting more education and those satisfied with their education seemed appropriate, there was a dearth of scholarship on what role having (or lacking) such desires might have on the acculturation process. One theory that appeared to be supported by my findings was that those who migrated to Israel seeking specific opportunities (educational, professional), but were denied those opportunities would develop negative feelings towards the country of migration (Kerri, 1976; Kontuly et al, 1995). Lamin, Rafik and Brehane all said that the pursuit of educational opportunities was a factor in them choosing to migrate to Israel and each expressed dissatisfaction with the lack educational opportunities available to them. All claimed that the lack of educational opportunity was one of the factors making them unhappy with Israel.

The situation of Amina and Joe is less clear. Earlier I classified both as individuals who were primarily motivated by push factors, which in both cases included the fear of persecution by the government. If this was true, then the lack of education available to them in Israel should be of secondary or minor importance and the fact that Israel does offer them protection should have a positive influence on their feelings toward the country. One way to explain this situation is to think of both participants as having multiple motivations for migrating. Although Joe did flee persecution, he made a conscious decision to go to Israel (instead of other countries in either the Middle East or sub-Saharan Africa) because he believed that life in Israel offered him the best opportunities for advancement. Getting to Israel and discovering that his dreams might not

be realized has also left a negative impression on him of Israel. While Amina never decided that Israel would be the best place for her, she did see it as a developed country where she could either use her skills (as a biologist or in computers) or continue her studies (pursuing a masters degree). Arriving in Israel and having no legal means of bettering herself or using her skills support to herself was very upsetting to Amina, something which has negatively influenced her perception of the country.

Not only was each of the participants seeking educational opportunities upset by their lack of access, but they listed similar factors as being responsible. All see their legal status as the primary impediment to obtaining additional education or training. While most participants see education as separate from their jobs, Brehane also finds that work-related training is affected by his legal status. He has never been selected to participate in free professional development training at his job because of his visa status; this has prevented him from receiving any promotions. Besides their legal status, every participant cited the high cost of education in Israel as a factor in their inability to access it. As the cost of living was so high in Israel and their incomes so low, none of the participants had been able to save enough money to afford to go to school. Joe also expressed frustration that there were no systems of support in place to assist asylum-seekers in this position.

While most of my participants expressed a desire for more education, a few did not. This surprised me, as I had expected that all of my participants would want more school. One's level of education did not seem to be a factor in this, but whether one thought of herself as having a trade or profession. It also surprised me at how strong a factor educational opportunities may have played in the migration decision making process: none of the participants desiring more

school believes that they will be able to continue their studies in Israel and each has said that this lack of opportunity is primary factor in their decision to leave Israel.

Work

With respect to work opportunities, the situation of the overwhelming majority of African refugees in Israel parallels the situation of illegal immigrants in the United States. Africans are not legally allowed to work and so usually find low-wage, low-skill, labor-intensive employment. This applies irrespective of one's qualifications or skill set. For my participants with technical skills or tertiary education, working doing menial labor was particularly distressing. Amina, Rebecca, Ibrahim, and John, who had been trained in a field before arriving in Israel, did not believe that their skills were being utilized in their jobs. They also lamented that if they were working in the fields they had been trained in, they would be of much more benefit to Israel. Rebecca, for instance, said that she could be very valuable as an English teacher, given that so many people in Israel struggle with the English language and want to improve their abilities. All but one of these participants (except for Rebecca) said that poor employment opportunities have led them to want to leave Israel. Rebecca had the opinion that her life in Israel might help her find employment (with an Israeli employer) upon returning to her home country, Nigeria; none of the others believed that their time in Israel had been valuable with respect to acquiring jobs in the future.

All of the participants who had not been trained in a field before coming to Israel (Rafik, Joe, Lamin and Brehane) viewed work as a means to survive while they pursued further education and/or training. Also, although they had been willing to work in low-skilled fields upon first arriving in Israel, each hoped he could progress. None of these participants felt that

they had been able to pursue these educational aims or advance in their jobs, however, and each said that they hoped to go to another country where they might be more successful.

While many scholars deride developed countries' immigration policies from a human capital perspective, arguing that such policies are inefficient and can cost a country millions or billions of dollars of potential revenue, most do not examine the role work opportunities may play in the acculturation process (Galarneau & Morissette, 2012; Reitz, 2005). Reitz and Sklar (1997) found that when controlling for other factors, racial or cultural differences play a role in the work opportunities afforded to migrants in Canada. Talking to other volunteers at ARDC, I learned that racial biases may have been in play in Israel well. Many said that employers like to hire Sudanese workers rather than Eritreans because of the belief that Sudanese have stronger bodies and call work longer. Of my participants who complained of the strenuousness and demandingness of their work (Lamin, Rafik, John, Rebecca, and Ibrahim), all were dark-skinned and from either Darfur or West Africa. Of my participants from the Horn of Africa (John and Brehane), one worked as a security guard and the other in a clothing store and neither felt that their work was particularly demanding. While those from the Horn of Africa worked alongside Israelis and had many opportunities to practice Hebrew, those working the strenuous jobs tended to work alongside other Africans and did not have the opportunities for similar interactions.

Although the idea that might be influential in understanding which work options were made available to my participants, it does not fit perfectly. Neither Joe nor Amina worked strenuous jobs, even though both are dark-skinned Darfuris. Perhaps due to his high level of Hebrew fluency and charismatic nature, Joe was able to find work at a café; that said, he was hired as kitchen staff, which may have served to restrict his interaction with café patrons. Amina chose to volunteer as a translator because of her language skills, but this work was only part-

time. If she had wanted full-time work, it is uncertain of the types of employment opportunities she would have been afforded.

Recognizing that one's racial characteristics may have influenced what opportunities for work they were offered, I should note that none of my participants indicated that those distinctions mattered to them. All considered themselves Africans and even lighter-skinned participants such as Brehane referred to themselves as black. Also, I should point out that irrespective of potential biases toward darker-skinned Africans, all of the participants said that they did not make enough money at their jobs and, given the costs of living in Israel, were making just enough to cover their basic living expenses. All felt restricted by the work opportunities available to them, which they attributed to their legal status, and none believe they could progress in Israel given the restrictions placed on them as African refugees.

Culture

What surprised me most about my participants was the admitted lack of knowledge each expressed regarding Israeli culture. In retrospect, I am not sure that there is a unified "Israeli culture," but I expected that my participants would have been able to talk about or describe aspects of what they considered Israeli culture. All of the participants said they believed that in every society there are good people and bad people and that Israel was no different.

Given that none of my participants claimed to know much about Israeli culture and all said that Israel contains both good and bad people, I did not expect that participants would vary in their desires to learn more about the culture. Contrary to my expectations, only four participants (Rebecca, John, Lamin and Rafik) were interested in knowing more about Israeli culture. The remaining participants were either opposed to learning more about Israeli culture or had an antagonistic view towards it. Amina and Ibrahim said that they did not want to learn

more about the culture, while Brehane and Joe said that they wanted to know more so that they would have a better understanding of the racism and anti-African prejudice present in Israeli society.

Although my participants did not claim to know much about Israeli culture or people, they had formed impressions of the culture and people. One participant, Rebecca, had a favorable view of Israelis and Israeli culture. She felt that Israelis were very accommodating and generous people and was sympathetic to the government's position on refugees. She has several Israeli friends whom she feels close to and believes that the country is doing much better than her country of origin, Nigeria.

Joe, Amina and Brehane had a negative view of the society. Joe and Brehane said that they did not have any Israeli friends. Amina said that she socialized with a number of Israelis, but that she suspected that Israelis had a "hidden face" that she could never trust; this prevented her from getting close to these people. All three of these participants said they did not like Israeli society because the policies in place discriminated against Africans, which they attributed to the prevalence of racism and prejudice in society.

John, Lamin and Rafik had a neutral view of Israeli society. They did not like the policies in place regarding African refugees, but they had had relatively positive experiences with Israelis. They did not have very strong social connections with Israelis, however, and felt insulated in their ethnic and religious communities. Ibrahim was unique in that he said that he did not like Israel, but he admitted that he had not had any negative experiences in the country; people had been fair to him and many had treated him well. He did express a dislike of the fact that women appeared to have higher status jobs in Israel, something which went against practice in Islamic countries.

One interesting finding in this is that participants' perceptions of Israel were related to the strength of friendships with Israelis. This is supported by the work of Bhui et al. (2005), which suggests that the greater number of friendships an immigrant has outside of their culture, the likely they are to develop positive feelings towards the host culture. Rebecca, the only participant with a positive view of the society, reported having the most and deepest friendships of all of the participants. Of those with negative perceptions of Israel, two said that they did not have friendships with Israelis and the third expressed being mistrustful of Israelis in general. Of those who were neutral, each said that they had not had bad experiences with Israelis, but also that they did not have any close friends.

Religion

Kontuly et al. (1995) argue that cultural affinity may play a role in the decision to immigrate, even when the immigrant does not explicitly recognize this affinity. In particular, they find that religious affiliation can have a strong influence on the decision to move and may also influence one's experiences after migration. If one is a member of the religious majority, one may feel positively towards the culture; if one is a member of the religious minority, one may develop negative feelings towards the culture. Although Israel is a Jewish state, none of my participants said they knew this before immigrating. The participants who had been raised as Christians, Rebecca, Brehane and John, had been taught that Israel was a holy and spiritual place, but none had received any education on Judaism. Each of them believed that they would be welcomed as Christians in Israel, but now feel that most Israelis have prejudices against Christians.

None of the participants who were raised as Muslims, Joe, Amina, Ibrahim, Lamin and Rafik, were taught about Judaism during their upbringing. Although he was not formally taught

about Judaism during his youth, Ibrahim was told that Jewish culture was incompatible with Muslim culture. Since arriving in Israel, Ibrahim believes that this incompatibility is, in part, explained by the different societal position women have in Israel versus the position of women in Muslim countries.

Although all of my participants now know that Israel is a Jewish state, they each reported that they remain largely ignorant of Judaism. The only participant who claimed to know something about Jewish practices, Rebecca, said that the extent of her knowledge was limited to some of the rules regarding Kosher food preparation. Although none of the participants was very knowledgeable about Judaism, none had attempted to learn more about the religion. Rebecca was the only participant who had been pressured by friends to learn more about Judaism. While she is open to learning more about the religion, she has also been pressured to convert, which is something she is unwilling to do.

Although Israel allows the free practice of religion, religion plays a major role in how one sees and is seen by others. While the issue of who is a Jew is hotly disputed, those who fall into this category have the inherent right to citizenship in Israel, regardless of their race, ethnicity or country of birth; Israel is the only country in the world that has adopted such a policy (Weiner, 2012). While none of my participants knew much about Judaism, all believed that religious affiliation played a role in their exclusion from Israeli society. Non-Jews, however, have no claim to citizenship in Israel. As my participants did not fit into the category of 'Jew,' they could felt they could never be included or integrated into Israeli society. All of them said they felt that Jews were considered the most important members of Israeli society. Although they recognized that Ethiopian Jews experienced difficulties in Israel, a couple (Joe and Brehane) still believed that Ethiopian Jews were different in that they were considered Israelis. Several (Joe,

Amina and Brehane) also said that Israelis kept non-Jews at a social distance and attributed their lack of close friendships with Israelis to this. In addition, at least one participant, Ibrahim, may have developed a bias against Israel because of his belief in the incompatibility of Judaism with Islam. All of my participants identified themselves as not being Jewish during our interviews, but also admitted that they had been largely ignorant of Judaism before going to Israel; this suggests they had developed a non-Jewish identity after arriving in Israel.

The State

In line with Ogbu and Simons' (1997) description of involuntary minorities, most of my participants saw their difficulties as forced upon them by the state. All of the participants felt that the restrictions placed on them by the conditional visa made their lives more difficult than if they had been granted more rights by the government. Rebecca was the only participant who defended the government's actions and believed they were justified. She maintained that the state needed to protect its people and that Africans did not deserve to have the same rights as native-born Israelis. Even with the restrictions placed on her by the conditional visa, Rebecca believed many more things (such as security, better infrastructure and medical assistance) were provided to her by the government of Israel than had been provided to her by Nigeria.

All of the other participants had a negative perception of the Israeli government. Each felt that the government issued conditional visas to make their lives more difficult. The major concerns they expressed were that there was no provision to allow them to work legally, to study or to help them learn the Hebrew language. Joe, Amina and John also expressed frustration that the state did nothing to support new refugees, leaving them to fend for themselves on the streets of Tel Aviv. Several participants (Joe, Amina, Brehane and John) saw this as an attempt to get rid of the Africans in Israel. Joe, Amina and Brehane also said that the government's refusal to

provide them with additional rights was a violation of human rights and international conventions that Israel has signed. Each of the participants who had a negative view of the state said that the lack of rights afforded them made them want to leave the country.

Among those participants with negative impressions of the Israeli government, three (Joe, Amina and Brehane) believed that the government was acting on the will of the Israeli people. All three felt that Israelis did not want Africans in Israel because of racist stereotypes and because they were not Jewish. These participants believed that these factors have led the government to the current policies and that therefore the blame for these policies also lies with the Israeli people. It is interesting that the three participants who blame the Israeli people for the government's policies also fell into the group of participants with a negative view of Israeli culture.

Examination of Berry's Model

One of my hypotheses was that the refugees would exhibit the characteristics of either marginalization or segregation in Israel. I believed that my participants would adopt either strategy given the legal and social difficulties facing them in Israel and due to the strong presence of other individuals from their countries of origin. Based upon my research, I believe this hypothesis was supported. None of the participants followed the acculturation strategy of marginalization, but most, if not all, followed an acculturation strategy of segregation. As segregation is characterized by the maintenance of one's culture of origin as well as by a lack of participation in the host country's culture, I address each of these in separate sections below.

Maintenance of cultural identity.

One aspect of a strategy of segregation is that the immigrant maintains their cultural identity. According to Berry (1997) there are many ways in which acculturating individuals maintain their cultural identity, ranging from the types of food one eats, to the language one chooses to speak, to the people that one socializes with. Working with my participants, each exhibited many characteristics indicating the maintenance of their cultural identity. In particular, my participants: lived and interacted with individuals from their countries of origin; utilized the languages of the countries of origin on a regular basis; and maintained contact with individuals in the countries of origin.

Living and interacting with individuals from countries of origin.

Living and interacting with individuals from one's culture of origin can help to preserve cultural values and reinforce cultural norms, but it can also provide a level of psychological support (Berry, 1997; Bhui et al.,2005). I found that all of my participants, with the exception of Lamin, were living with at least one other person from their country of origin. Except for Rebecca, none of my participants had ever lived with an Israeli and no one expressed an interest in doing so.

Although there was a tendency for the participants to live with individuals from their culture of origin, this did not mean that my participants chose not to live with other cultural groups. In the cases of Amina and Rafik, the participants had family who they were expected to live with. John is living with friends who he knows from Eritrea. Ibrahim and Joe live in mixed settings, both with Africans from their culture of origin as well as Africans from other cultures, indicating that they are amenable to living with people from other cultures. Of the participants, Brehane and Victoria are the only two that expressed a desired to live with individuals from their

culture. Brehane wanted to live with and amongst other Ethiopian refugees, the community his wife also belongs to. Rebecca left her living situation with an Israeli woman in order to live with people more accepting of her cultural practices.

All of the participants also said that they have friendships with individuals from their countries of origin. With the exception of Rebecca, these people were their closest friends in Israel. Several participants (Rafik, Brehane, Lamin, Amina, Joe, Rebecca and John) also said that there were large communities of individuals from their host countries in Israel and that it was easier to interact with them than with individuals from other communities. Rafik also said that his lack of interaction with Israelis was due to the fact that he did not need to look outside of the Tel Aviv Darfuri community to find friends or have social interaction. Brehane said that the primary reason he moved to Tel Aviv from another part of Israel was the presence of a thriving non-Jewish Ethiopian community in the city.

Utilization of the languages of origin.

What language an immigrant speaks and under what situations can indicate how that individual views their culture of origin; those who tend to use the languages of their cultures of origin show higher levels of engagement with their cultures of origin (Berry, 1997; Berry et al., 2006; Bhui et al., 2005). Of my participants, everyone speaks a language from their country of origin in their household. Joe, Amina, Ibrahim, Brehane, Rafik and John all speak the language they are most fluent in with housemates. The other participants (Rebecca and Lamin) speak English, a national language of their countries, at home.

Contact with countries of origin.

What is most surprising to me is that each of my participants maintains contact with individuals in their country of origin. This is accomplished primarily through use of the computer program Skype, which allows them to make either free or very low cost calls to their friends or family, and is available at most internet cafes in Tel Aviv. For most of my participants (Lamin, Rafik, Amina, John, Rebecca, Ibrahim and Brehane), they still speak to family members in their countries of origin. Although Joe does not know where his family is, he has friends in Sudan who he communicates with. When asked, each participant said that talking to people back home allows them make sure their loved ones are okay and also keeps them abreast of events occurring in their countries of origin. Several participants (Rebecca, Brehane, Joe, Amina and John) also reported reading media (online newspapers, blogs and radio programs) from back home as well.

Non-interpersonal relationships.

It is evident from the types of evidence I supplied that I focused more on the interpersonal relationships of my participants than other features of cultural maintenance, such as the type of cuisine my respondents chose to eat or the clothing they chose to wear. I chose not to focus on these features as I believed that they were more dependent upon the environmental context than other features. For instance, most of my participants wore clothing that was available in the local clothing markets; this tended to be western clothing. Such clothing is available cheaply (more cheaply than traditional clothing) throughout Africa and the Middle East and so choosing to wear such clothing might have very little to do with self-perception of one's culture of origin. Also, while I did not emphasize food, I do believe that most of my participants exhibited a preference for food from their countries of origin. For my Darfurian, Ethiopian and

Eritrean participants, there were several local establishments that served food from their cultures of origin and my participants would eat at these establishments on a regular basis or prepare their foods at home. In Rebecca's case, she decided to leave her living situation with an Israeli woman because the woman did not like her preparing Nigerian food.

Lack of participation in the host country's culture.

In addition to the maintenance of cultural identity, separation entails that there is a lack of engagement with other cultural groups. Individuals who do not participate in the host culture may: feel that members of the host culture discriminate against them, choose not to learn the language of the host culture or avoid the music and media of the host culture (Bhui et al., 2005). My participants exhibited lack of engagement with the dominant cultural group as they were ignorant of many aspects of the culture, tended not use the Hebrew language, and did not have close relationships with Israelis.

Lack of knowledge about Israeli culture.

All of my participants said that they did not know much about Israeli culture and that they did not have many opportunities to participate in the culture. Activities that participants said they had never done included going to Israeli cultural events or celebrations, visiting the homes of Israelis for dinner or learning about the history of Israel. While several (Rebecca, John, Lamin and Rafik) said that they were interested in learning more about Israeli culture, none were actively pursuing this. The other participants (Ibrahim, Joe, Amina and Brehane) said that they were not interested in understanding Israeli culture.

While everyone recognized that Israel was a Jewish state, no one was interested in learning about the Jewish religion. Rebecca said that she would be willing to go to a Jewish

service, but she was not interested in becoming Jewish; all of the rest of the participants did not have an interest in attending a service nor had they in the past. While they did not want to become Jewish or to understand the religion, several participants (Joe, Brehane and Amina) felt that society put Jews first and that Africans therefore could never be fully accepted by society.

Lack of use of Hebrew.

Most of the participants (Amina, Ibrahim, Lamin, Rebecca, John and Rafik) had either low or very low levels of Hebrew proficiency. Of these, half (Amina, Ibrahim and Lamin) were not taking any Hebrew lessons nor did they have plans to take Hebrew in the future. While Brehane and Joe had higher levels of speaking proficiency, neither said they were interested in using their Hebrew to improve communication between themselves and Israelis nor did they like learning the language; instead, they saw their Hebrew as a mechanism for understanding anti-African prejudice in society.

Although not the language of origin for most of my participants, I believe that the use of English may illustrate a desire not to engage with the host country culture. In situations where their languages of origin could not be used for communication with others, many of my participants opted to use English as opposed to Hebrew. Ibrahim, Joe, Rebecca and Lamin use English to communicate with individuals they live with who do not speak the same tribal language. Also, while several of my participants (Joe, Ibrahim and Rafik) admitted to switching to English with their friends in order to practice speaking, none of them said that they spoke Hebrew with their friends. As I suggested in the cross-cultural comparison section, the use of English with Israelis might be an attempt to put the interaction on a more even playing field. This is perhaps best illustrated by Lamin's fish story, in which he attributes the altercation between himself and the seller to the seller's unwillingness to use English. For Lamin, the fact

that the seller did not attempt to use English, a global language, in his interactions with potential clients put the seller, and not Lamin, at fault.

Lack of relationships with Israelis.

With respect to my participants' relationships with Israelis, I included interactions in organizations, close friendships and living with Israelis or in predominantly Israeli communities. None of the participants participated in organizations with Israelis and only one, Rebecca, reported having close friendships with Israelis. Of the rest, most (Lamin, Rafik, Brehane and Joe) did not have friends, while the rest (Amina, Ibrahim and John) said that their relationships were not very close. Joe, Amina and Brehane did not feel like they could trust Israelis; Joe also felt that Israeli human rights organizations did not have the best interests of Africans at heart (being more focused on making money), making him weary of participating in any Israeli organizations.

None of the participants lives with Israelis nor did any report any interest in living with them. All reported living in neighborhoods with large numbers of African refugees and said that their interactions with Israelis were limited in their neighborhoods. While Rebecca had lived with an Israeli, she decided to leave as she felt that she couldn't practice certain aspects of her culture (cooking). Ibrahim did say that there was one Israeli woman living in his apartment building, but also that she was at odds with most of the Africans living there. Brehane explained that one of his primary motivations for moving to Tel Aviv was that he wanted to live among members of his Ethiopian community.

Rebecca's case.

Rebecca presents an interesting case as she was the only participant to have a positive impression of the host country and, at least on the surface, exhibited many of the characteristics I associate with integration or assimilation. More than the other participants, she holds a negative view of her society and culture of origin. When discussing Nigerians, she says that they are lazy and corrupt. She also does not consider the Nigerians she knows in Israel as being close friends. Although she believes that Israel will force her to return home, she would rather remain in Israel for the rest of her life if it were possible. Rebecca does not use her native Ebo very often in Israel, nor does she associate with people from her tribe. She sees tribalism back home as a major negative force and it is something that contributes to her low opinion of Nigeria.

Rebecca also holds a better impression of Israel and Israelis than the other participants. She counts several Israelis as friends and feels that the people of Israel are more friendly and industrious than those of her country of origin. She also maintains regular contact with several Israeli friends. Even though she admits that her life is more difficult due to being issued a conditional visa, she understands the government's position and maintains a positive opinion of it.

While Rebecca exhibits several characteristics associated with integration or assimilation, there are other aspects of her behavior that are associated with separation. Rebecca may view Nigeria in a negative light, but she still has familial connections there and continues to stay abreast of events there (reading online Nigerian newspapers and listening to radio programs). Also, she has chosen to live with other Nigerians because of their willingness to accept her customs (such as the preparation of Nigerian food). While she is pleased with the infrastructure and safety of Israel, Rebecca does not participate in Israeli society to a great extent. She is a

beginner level Hebrew student and cannot communicate in the language either socially or professionally. She does not participate in any organizations with Israelis, nor does she have intimate knowledge of Israeli society.

Summation.

I have argued that most of my participants have exhibited an acculturation strategy of separation. Separation entails that the individuals in question maintain their culture of origin while also not engaging in the host culture. Berry suggests that such a strategy is only possible when other members of the culture of origin exist in the host culture and "can only be pursued when other members of one's ethnocultural group share in the wish to maintain the group's cultural heritage" (p. 11). Based on my observations, all of my participants lived with and among other individuals with similar cultural backgrounds; these communities were large enough that my participants did not need to look outside of them for social interaction. Berry (1997) also claims that even if individuals wish to integrate or assimilate into a society, this may not be possible when "physical features set them apart from the society of settlement," as this may lead them to experience prejudice and discrimination (p. 11). Based on my research experiences (interviews, reading of media, informal discussions, etc.), ethnic and racial discrimination also served to exclude Africans from many aspects of Israeli social life. Given these factors, separation seemed the most natural strategy for my participants to adopt.

While I have argued that most of my participants exhibited a strategy of separation, it is important to point out that aspects of their behavior were indicative of other strategies. Rebecca is the most obvious example of this, as I found many characteristics of hers as being indicative of other acculturation strategies. Another example of this is evidenced by many of my participants' willingness to study Hebrew; that some were willing to learn the language suggests some level of

openness to Israeli society. Also, several of my participants expressed interest in learning more about Israeli culture or had a neutral perspective of Israeli society and people. Each of these strategies would be more indicative of groups attempting to integrate or assimilate. That my participants exhibited these characteristics does not mean that Berry's model is flawed, only that the full picture is more complex. Based on all of the factors that I considered I believe that separation is the strategy that my participants have adopted, but recognize that Berry's model may only provide a general idea of how the acculturation process works and that there are a number of individual factors which can influence the trajectory one follows as they acculturate.

Examination of Ogbu's Theory

Ogbu separates immigrant minorities into two categories, voluntary immigrants and involuntary immigrants (Ogbu & Simmons, 1998). Voluntary immigrants migrate to a new society in the hope of a better future and do not see their presence in the new country as forced upon them. While voluntary immigrants may experience discrimination, they tend not to exhibit long-lasting cultural or language problems. Involuntary immigrants, on the other hand, did not choose to become part of the country by choice and they interpret their presence in the country as forced upon them. Involuntary immigrants tend to have more persistent language and cultural difficulties and are often economically less successful than the dominant group. With the exception of Rebecca, each of the participants exhibited the characteristics of an involuntary immigrant. This was evidenced by their lack of trust in the dominant society's institutions, their belief that the difficulties they face in Israel are insurmountable and their feelings that life in Israel is not measurably better than their countries of origin.

Evidence for involuntary immigrants.

Seven of the participants expressed a negative view of the Israeli government. Each of them said that the conditional visa they had been issued made their lives very difficult, preventing them from pursuing educational aspirations or finding good work. Government policies such as these that this was the primary reason participants wanted to leave Israel. Brehane, Joe and Amina also expressed their belief that the lack of support for refugees by the Israeli government was a violation of human rights. Joe and Brehane also said that the government was interested in only helping Jews, which meant that it would never represent the interests of non-Jewish Africans. Joe also said that if some support (either from the government or local groups) were provided to refugees, many would realize their educational and professional aspirations.

The same seven participants said that their lives would never improve in Israel because of the restrictions placed on them. They did not see their conditional release status as something that could be overcome and three of them (Joe, Brehane and Amina) believed that all Israelis had prejudices against Africans and non-Jews that would prevent Israelis from accepting them. Ibrahim also believed that Jewish society was incompatible with Islam, suggesting to him that he would never get ahead as a Muslim.

Additionally, there was a lack of interest in learning about the culture of Israel. None of the participants believed that they knew a lot about Israeli culture and yet none were attempting to learn more about the culture or the Jewish religion. Most participants exhibited low levels of interest in learning Hebrew. Among them, two (Ibrahim and Amina) had not studied (nor did they have an interest in studying) Hebrew. Two others, Rafik and Lamin, believed English was more important than Hebrew and so opted to cease or reduce their Hebrew language studies in

order to improve their English. The two participants with the highest levels of Hebrew proficiency, Joe and Brehane, had the lowest opinions of Israeli culture and expressed the least interest in learning more about it.

Rebecca's situation.

Rebecca was the only participant that seemed to exhibit many of the characteristics of a voluntary immigrant. Even though she claimed not to know a lot about Israeli culture, she had a high level of faith in the culture and in Israeli institutions. She believed Israelis to be nice and hard-working people and was pleased with the way she had been treated in country (people opening up their homes to her, receiving low-cost treatment at a hospital). Rebecca also did not have a problem with the government's policy towards Africans; she felt that issuing migrants conditional visas was fair and that being allowed to remain in the country was a generous act in and of itself. Rebecca also made several negative comparisons of Nigeria with respect to Israel. Not only did she feel that Nigerians were lazy and rude, she thought that Nigerian politicians were corrupt and that tribalism and religious tension were preventing the country from advancing. She lauded Israel for making the advances it has, even though the world continues to attack it because of the Palestinian situation.

Summation.

Ogbu and Simons (1997) say that refugees are a unique population in that they may adopt some of the characteristics of the dominant group (such as learning the language and doing well academically), while also being able to maintain their culture of origin (p. 165). To me, this depiction is akin to Berry's (1997) acculturation strategy of integration. Among my participants, most did not adopt the characteristics mentioned by Ogbu and Simons (1997). Of my

participants, all but one exhibited many of the characteristics of involuntary minorities. Each of them maintained the language and culture of their countries of origin; this was possible as they had access to their own ethnic communities in Tel Aviv and were able to continue contact with individuals in their countries of origin. They also saw racial and religious differences as the main factors behind their lack of success in Israel and all believed that they would have better opportunities in other countries if they were able to immigrate.

I have already mentioned that an immigrant's acculturation strategy may be influenced by many factors, including how the dominant society responds to the immigrant group. Although my participants exhibited many of the characteristics of involuntary minorities, I believe that this response may have been due to the social and legal restrictions placed upon them. None of my participants had the legal right to work nor did they have the right to social or educational services. Most knew that much of the media attention directed towards refugees in Israel was negative and all of my participants believed that their days in Israel were numbered. In addition, many of my participants saw their race as an immutable factor in how Israelis responded to them; evidence of this racial discrimination against African migrants has been documented both in Israel and other parts of the developed world (ARDC, 2012; Freidman, 2010; Reitz & Sklar, 1997; Tsurkov, 2010a; Tsurkov, 2010b). In effect, my participants realized that adopting the dominant language or culture would not benefit them substantially and given this situation, it is easy to understand their lack of willingness to engage with the host society.

I argue that most of my participants exhibited the characteristics of involuntary minorities, but want to emphasize that this was only a general depiction. Participants such as Joe and Brehane had learned to speak Hebrew relatively well and several of the participants mentioned having an Israeli friend and socializing with Israelis at least occasionally. This

suggests that while my participants had some reservations about Israeli society, that they were still willing to maintain friendships with Israelis.

Observations and Conclusion

This purpose of this section is to discuss the relevance of my work to those who are interested in working with African asylum seekers in Israel. Before I continue with this, it is important to point out that my study has only taken into account the voices of eight asylum-seekers and may not be representative of all asylum seekers in Israel. Also, my participants were all language learners and represented a small fraction of the countries from which African asylum seekers in Israel come. That said, the fact that most of my participants had many of the same problems and expressed similar frustrations suggests that my findings may have significance not only for the language learners, but for Africans asylum seekers in Israel overall.

The most salient observation is that pursuing an education is very important to African asylum seekers. Many arrive in Israel believing that they will need either vocational training or a tertiary degree in order to get ahead in life. When they arrive in Israel and find very few educational opportunities available to them, many become frustrated and cynical. Greg and Gow (2005) have found that education programs contribute both to the psychological well-being of refugees as well as keep them motivated in very difficult situations. As higher education in Israel is expensive, it may not be feasible to send every African asylum seeker to university. Many asylum seekers are primary or secondary school leavers, however, and may be amenable to programs that help them to master the material encountered in secondary school; such programs could be run using volunteers and free or low cost rental spaces, which would keep costs low.

Another point is that many African asylum-seekers imagine themselves immigrating to the West, most citing the United States as one of the countries they most wanted to go. To African asylum-seekers, the US represents the country where they will be able to attain both their educational and economic goals. Many hold this dream for years or even decades, even though the likelihood of an asylum-seeker successfully making it to the US is extremely low. Conversing with many asylum-seekers, many of them contrasted their experiences in Israel with an idealized vision of what their lives would be like in the US. While I think this helped to motivate many asylum-seekers to seek refuge outside of Israel, refuge services organizations should do more to explain the difficulties refugees living in the West encounter as well as provide more information on other possibilities for relocation.

A third observation is many Africans do not feel that there are opportunities to interact with Israelis socially. This leaves many of them feeling disconnected from Israeli society. If more energy was directed towards encouraging Israeli-African interaction (such as athletic clubs and common interest groups), this might not only foster greater understanding between Israelis and Africans, but would be opportunity for and incentive to improve Hebrew and/or English language skills. Havlova (n.d.) has documented evidence that encouraging intergroup interaction was successful at reducing xenophobia and racism against minorities and refugees in the Czech Republic, as well as increasing intercultural awareness. While groups like these sometimes occur organically (such as the weekly soccer game that Ibrahim is a part of), there is a bigger role that NGOs and community-based organizations could play in facilitating this process. Although I think that more can be done to foster intercultural interaction, I do believe that there may be obstacles to this. One concern is that it could be difficult to get Israeli participation, given the types of discrimination that my participants have reported. That said, organizations

such as the ARDC have actually found many segments of Israeli society willing to volunteer and/or contribute to their work.

A fourth observation is that most of the language students wanted additional, more intensive classes each week, as they felt that their language skills were not improving at a sufficient rate. Research conducted by Bhatia and Ram (2001) suggests that this indicates a lack of communication between program administrators, teachers and students. As teachers do not understand the expectations of their students (and vice versa), each party may end up frustrated by the other. In order to deal with this issue, efforts should be made to include students in the decision making process and more attention should be paid to student-teacher-administrator communication.

One last observation has to do with notions of identity. I found that being 'African' was a concept that superseded other forms of identity, such as religion, nationality or tribe. This surprised me, as I do not think that African identity had a significant meaning to my participants until they left sub-Saharan Africa. As their presence in Israel has been relatively short, I expected that the cultural differences that had led to conflict in Africa would still influence interactions between Africans in Israel; instead, there was a marked lack of conflict between different groups and often they would organize together. For me, this shows how quickly notions of identity can evolve, but also speaks to the role of societal and cultural forces in influencing the beliefs and behaviors of individuals.

While being African became a unifying force, the notion of being 'not Jewish' also became a source of identity. Each of my participants understood that that their non-Jewish status prevented them from becoming citizens. They recognized that both their African-ness and their non-Jewishness excluded them from mainstream society, something which led them to resent

and mistrust those who were not African and/or Jewish. While much could be done to grant Africans more rights and to help them to participate more fully in Israeli society, the government has been explicit in its aim to make Israel unappealing to Africans so as to prevent them from migrating to Israel or desiring to stay (Sobelman, 2010).

Recommendations for the ARDC.

In the previous section I made several observations, which could be useful for policy makers or educators interested in the acculturation of African refugees in Israel. I would also like to make a few suggestions that are specific to the language program at ARDC. First, the language program should evaluate the possibility of offering language classes at various times during the day; currently language classes are held at nights during the week, but there may be students who are only available during the mornings or on the weekends. Also, the language program should consider expanding its teacher training program. Currently, the center offers only a few hours of training and observation before putting volunteer teachers into the classroom. While this works for some, other volunteer teachers feel unprepared for the difficulties they face in the classroom. If teacher training took place over a period of 1-2 weeks and was combined with some form of teacher evaluation, this could improve not only the quality of the teaching (benefiting the students and the program overall), but also reduce teacher stress. One last recommendation is that the program seek ways to combine the language programs with other educational programs the students find important. For instance, interested higher level Hebrew students could also participate in some sort of technical training activity (such as learning to repair appliances or vehicles); this would give them more incentive to learn the language, help to expand their vocabulary and provide them with a skill that might be marketable in the future.

Further research.

Although there were a number of interesting findings derived from this research, it is important to acknowledge that there is room for further work in this area. First, my work with African refugee language learners may have applications to African refugees in general, but there may be differences between the language learning population (who may be more motivated or more knowledgeable about Israeli culture) and other African refugees in Israel. While it might be difficult for a researcher to gain access to African refugees not connected to an advocacy organization or language program in Israel, this would be very useful for individuals interested in working with the overall African refugee population.

Another area that should be explored is Israeli perceptions of Africans. Although I spoke to Israelis to supplement my student participant interviews, the focus of my research was not on Israeli perspectives of or reactions to the refugees. As acculturation is a process dependent upon the interaction of Africans with Israelis, learning about the responses of Israelis to the recent influx of Africans would complement my research.

Further research might also examine whether the process of acculturation is better viewed as domain specific rather than as a singular, holistic concept. While I preferred to approach acculturation as a singular concept, work done by Luque, Fernandez and Tejas (2006) attempts to parse the concept into individual spheres (including work, economic, family relations and social relations, among others). This could yield a more nuanced understanding of how refugees are responding to life in Israel (for example, a refugee's work life may reflect an acculturation strategy of marginalization, while their social relations reflect the strategy of integration).

Appendix A:

Student-Participant Interview Protocols

Research Questions	Student Protocol 1	Student Protocol 2	Student Protocol 3	Teacher Protocol 1	Teacher Protocol 2
What types of social interactions do African refugees have with Israelis and how often do they occur?		■			
What language, technical, or cultural skills do African refugees have that help them participate more fully in the Israeli economy?		■	■		
What feelings do African refugees have towards Israel and Israeli people and how have these feelings changed over time?	■				
What people, places and activities in Israel are most important to African refugees?		■			
How do African refugee students feel about the school and their teachers and what role do the students feel English language classes play in influencing (1), (2) and (3)?			■		
What perspectives do the English teachers have of Israeli society & culture and of the societies/cultures of their students? How does this influence student teacher interactions?				■	■
What activities are the English teachers engaging in that influence (1), (2) and (3) and what difficulties do they face in doing so?				■	■

Figure 2: Interview Protocol Mapping onto Research Questions

Student Participant Interview Protocol 1

Student ID Code_____

Date_____

Age_____ Nationality_____ English Language Course Level_____

Student Background Information:

1. When did you first come to Israel?

   _____

   _____

2. Did you come by yourself or with family or friends?

   _____

   _____

3. What were the reasons for coming to Israel?

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. What part of Tel Aviv do you live in?

   _____

5. Do you live with family members or people you knew before coming to Israel?

   _____

   a. If so, how many of these people do you live with? _____
   b. How are each of these people related/connected to you (mother/father/son/daughter/in-law/cousin/friend)?
      i. Person 1 _____
      ii. Person 2 _____
      iii. Person 3 _____
      iv. Person 4 _____
      v. Person 5 _____
      vi. Person 6 _____

6. Are there many people from your home country where you live?

   _____

7. What language(s) do you speak where you currently live?

   _____

8. Do you have a religion? _____
   a. If so, what is your religion? _____
9. Do you associate yourself with a race (black, white, etc)? _____
   a. If so, what is your race? _____
10. Do you have a job here?

    _____

    a. If so, where do you work?

       _____

    b. What do you do at your job?

       _____

11. Additional Notes:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Student Perceptions of Israel & Israelis:

1. When you lived in your last country, what did you imagine Israel would be like?

_____
_____
_____

2. Is life here different than you expected? If so, how?

_____
_____
_____

3. What do you like most about living in Israel?

_____
_____
_____

4. What do you like least about living in Israel?

_____
_____
_____

5. What is the hardest thing about immigrating to Israel?

_____
_____
_____

6. If it were up to you, would you go back to your country of origin, stay here or go somewhere else (where?)? Why?

_____
_____
_____

7. How do you feel about Israelis (in general)?

_____
_____
_____

    a. Why do you feel this way?

_____
_____
_____

8. Have your feelings about Israeli people changed since coming to Israel?

_____
_____
_____

   a. If yes, what events, if any, have led to this change?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Student Participant Interview Protocol 2 (Interactions with Israelis and Student Skills/Proficiencies)

Student ID Code_____

Date_____

Student Interactions with Israelis:

- Do you participate in any social activities with Israelis (playing on the same sports teams, attending the same synagogue/mosque/church, members of the same organization, etc) on a regular basis? (If there are multiple Israelis who fit this category, as the student to select the two they know the best and ask questions below)

  _____

  _____

  _____

  - (**For 1st Person**) Do you speak/interact with them regularly?

    _____

    _____

    _____

  - (**For 1st Person**) How well would you say you know them? What makes you think so?

    _____

    _____

    _____

  - (**For 1st Person**) Do you like them? Why?

    _____

    _____

    _____

  - (**For 2nd Person**) Do you speak/interact with them regularly?

    _____

    _____

    _____

  - (**For 2nd Person**) How well would you say you know them? What makes you think so?

    _____

    _____

    _____

  - (**For 2nd Person**) Do you like them? Why?

    _____

    _____

    _____

  -

- Do you have any Israeli friends? If so, how many? (If multiple friends, ask student to select closest two Israeli friends)

  _____

  _____

  _____

- (**For 1st Person**) How did you become friends?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- (**For 1st Person**) How often do you spend time with them?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- (**For 1st Person**) What sorts of activities do you do together?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- (**For 2nd Person**) How did you become friends?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- (**For 2nd Person**) How often do you spend time with them?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- (**For 2nd Person**) What sorts of activities do you do together?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- Besides what was discussed above, do you speak with/interact with Israelis any other time during the week? If so, what types of interactions are these (personal/professional/other?)?

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

- For each type of interaction mentioned above:

  _____

  - What does the interaction consist of?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

  - Is this interaction one you enjoy? Why?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

- What does the interaction consist of?

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

- Is this interaction one you enjoy? Why?

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

- What does the interaction consist of?

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

- Is this interaction one you enjoy? Why?

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

-

- Additional Notes:

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

Student Language, Technical and Cultural Skills:

- How important is obtaining a (good/better) job to you?

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

- What types of (language/technical/cultural) skills or knowledge do you need to obtain a (good/better) job in Israel?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- For each skill listed:

  _____

  - (**Skill 1**) Why do you feel this skill is important?

    _____

_____
_____
_____

- Do you have this skill? If so, where and how did you acquire it?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- If you don't have a skill, do you feel it is possible to gain it in Israel? How?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- Are you attempting (or will you attempt) to gain this skill?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- (**Skill 2**) Why do you feel this skill is important?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- Do you have this skill? If so, where and how did you acquire it?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- If you don't have a skill, do you feel it is possible to gain it in Israel? How?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- Are you attempting (or will you attempt) to gain this skill?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- (**Skill 3**) Why do you feel this skill is important?

_____
_____

_____
_____

- Do you have this skill? If so, where and how did you acquire it?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- If you don't have a skill, do you feel it is possible to gain it in Israel? How?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- Are you attempting (or will you attempt) to gain this skill?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- Additional Notes:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Student Participant Interview Protocol 3 (Education & Teaching)

Student ID Code_____

Date_____

Education at School/Language Program:

1. Why do you want to study English (what goals do you have)?

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Why did you choose this school to study at?

_____
_____
_____

3. What do you like most about this school?

_____
_____
_____

4. What do you like least about this school?

_____
_____
_____

5. How does your teacher treat most Africans?

_____
_____
_____
_____

6. How does your teacher treat you?

_____
_____
_____
_____

7. What is the most difficult thing about school?

_____
_____
_____
_____

8. Do you feel your class is helping you learn English? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____

9. Do you enjoy your class (overall)? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____

10. Do you like your teacher? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____

11. Do you think your teacher is a good teacher? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Culture-related learning at school:

1. Have you learned anything about Israeli people, culture or customs through your language classes?

_____

   a. If so, what things have you learned?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

   b. How were you taught these things? Who was responsible for teaching you these things?

_____
_____
_____

c. How do you feel about what you've learned about these things (happy, angry, confused, etc)?

d. How do the things you've learned differ from your culture/customs, etc?

e. Have any of the things you learned made you change your behavior? If so, how?

Role of Classes in Helping Students to Develop Technical Skills:

1. (If student expressed interest in developing technical skills for employment) Have your language classes helped better prepare you to enter a technical course or develop technical skills?

   a. If so, how has this course helped?

   b. What things have you learned?

_____
_____
_____

c. How were you taught these things? Who was responsible for teaching you these things?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Influence on Beliefs/Feelings of Israel:

1. Since you started this class, do you like living in Israel more or less (or the same)? If there has been a change, what is the reason(s)?

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. (Overall) How do you feel about living in Israel now?

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Has this class helped you to improve your life here? If so, how?

_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Do you think you will take more language classes at this school after this?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix B: Teacher-Participant Interview Protocols

Teacher Participant Interview Protocol 1 (Perspectives of Teaching/Students)

Teacher ID Code_____

Date_____

Nationality_____ Age _____ Levels of English Taught_____

Gender: M F

Teacher Background:

1. How long have you been a teacher?

   _____

2. How long have you been teaching at this school?

   _____

3. Why did you originally begin teaching here?

   _____

4. Are you a teacher by profession?

   _____

5. If not Israeli:
   a. How long have you lived in Israel?

      _____

   b. Why did you come to Israel?

      _____

   c. How well do you feel you understand Israeli society, culture and customs?

      _____

   d.

6. Do you identify with a religion?

   _____

   a. If so, which one?

      _____

7. Do you identify with a particular race or ethnic group?

   _____

   a. If so, which one(s)?

      _____

8. Besides English, what other languages do you speak and to what extent (scale 1 [Novice] – 5 [Native])?
   a. Language 1 _____ Proficiency 1 2 3 4 5
   b. Language 2 _____ Proficiency 1 2 3 4 5
   c. Language 3 _____ Proficiency 1 2 3 4 5
   d. Language 4 _____ Proficiency 1 2 3 4 5
   e. Language 5 _____ Proficiency 1 2 3 4 5
9. Besides Israel, what other countries have you lived in and for how long?
   a. Country 1 _____ Duration _____
   b. Country 2 _____ Duration _____
   c. Country 3 _____ Duration _____
   d. Country 4 _____ Duration _____

e. Country 5 _____ Duration _____

Perspectives of Teaching & School:

1. What do you like most about teaching?

   _____
   _____
   _____

2. What do you like least about teaching?

   _____
   _____
   _____

3. What do you like most about this school?

   _____
   _____
   _____

4. What do you like least about this school?

   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Could you tell me about your teaching philosophy (what is the purpose of education? What is the relationship between teacher and students?)

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. What, for you, is the intent of the language classes you teach?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

7. What are some of the biggest problems you face here with respect to your teaching?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

Perspectives of Students:

1. How many students do you teach here?

   _____

2. How much time do you spend teaching here each week?

   _____

3. Can you describe what you think would be the ideal student (in terms of behavior, mannerisms, perspectives, etc)?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Can you describe what you think would be the least ideal student?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. What do you like most about your students here?

   _____
   _____
   _____

6. What do you like least about your students here?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

7. What is the most difficult part about interacting with your students?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

8. How much time do you spend interacting with students outside of class?

   _____

   a. In what capacity do you interact with them?

      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____

9. Additional Comments:

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

Teacher Participant Interview Protocol 2 (Culture-Related Activities)

Teacher ID Code_____

Date_____

Culture Teaching in the Classroom:

1. Do you attempt to teach your students about culture through your lessons?

   _____

   a. If so, why do you think teaching about culture is important?

      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____

   b. What culture(s) do you think it is important for them to know about?

      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____

   c. What aspects of these cultures do you focus on?

      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____

   d. Can you give an example of what you might do to teach a cultural concept or theme?

      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____
      _____

2. Based on your observations, how have your students responded to your attempts to teach culture (hostile, interested, etc)?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

a. If their responses were unexpected or undesirable, how did you deal with/respond to this?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. How knowledgeable about the cultures of your students would you say you are?

_____
_____
_____
_____

a. In what ways did/are you learning about your students' cultures?

_____
_____
_____
_____

b. Would you say that you hold a positive, negative or neutral perspective of their cultures? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Have you noticed any changes in behavior or speech stemming from any of your cultural lessons?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Would you say your students generally have a positive, negative, or neutral view of Israeli culture/society? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

a. Do you feel this perspective has changed for any of your students throughout the course and if so how?

_____
_____

_____
_____
_____

b. Do you generally have a positive, negative or neutral view of Israeli culture/society? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

6. In not already touched upon, can you think of any ways in which your teaching may help your students acclimate to life in Israel?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

7. Additional Comments:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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